



A CRUISE IN THE PACIFIC.

FROM THE LOG

OR

A NAVAL OFFICER.

EDITED BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1860.

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LONDON :

Printed by A. Schulze, 13, Poland Street.

A YEAR'S CRUISE

IN

THE PACIFIC.

CHAPTER I.

“And thou wilt pray for me—I know thou wilt—
Thou’lt lift thy eyes
Full of sweet tears into the darkened skies,
And plead for me with Heaven.”

MOORE.

We put in at Lahina next, on the island of Mawkee or Maui. This is, by many people, considered the most picturesque of the group. The town itself is large and straggling, extending nearly two miles along the bay, but possessing only one street, and very

few public buildings, none of which can boast any beauty.

The old palace ranks first in importance, then the fort, which is, like that of Honolulu, only of use to fire salutes from, next, the churches, and one or two hospitals. There are a number of places called victualling-houses, and these bear a very low character, and subsist principally by fleecing “Jacks” who come ashore after a long voyage.

The harbour is one of the best; you require no pilot, and when in are as safe from wind or sea as if on land. I have been in this harbour as quiet as in my bed at home, while the winds and waves were holding battle outside the bar, with noise enough to wake the dead; at other times the leaves of the plantain and palm, torn off by the tempest, were cracking against our masts and rigging like pistol shots.

The gales, though frequent, are easily prepared for, as they come at regular times, and always from the same point. The neighbour-

hood is entirely overrun with the indigo plant, in the first instance planted by the missionaries, but having found a congenial climate and soil, and from being totally neglected, has become a perfect weed, and threatens to cover the whole island, to the exclusion of every other product.

The taro root is not so much cultivated as in some of the other islands. The landscape is very pretty, the hills rising behind the town and forming a magnificent background, varied by every passing cloud, and encircled by the everlasting green of the forest, whose brightness and verdure never fade.

I have said that the immorality of the natives exceeds belief. Child-murder was common long after the date of the missionaries' arrival. Every sickly infant was buried.

The hero of the following story, one of those shining lights we now and then meet with, even amidst the darkest scenes in the world, was destined to share this fate, as, when born, he was

so weak, small, and sickly, that his mother determined to rid herself of the trouble and pain she would incur in rearing him, and for this purpose, adopted the licensed custom of burying the child.

Seeking out a quiet spot, she laid him down, while, with her hands, she scooped out his little grave. Herein she laid him, and covering him up with grass and sand, left him to die, happy to escape the trouble of his cries.

There was, however, another and far different fate in store for the sickly infant, and He, in whose eyes a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without being known, had marked out a glorious and triumphant career for it; and strength was given to the infant to cast off the slight covering. Its cries reached the ears of another woman, a poor, stricken mother, whose only child had just breathed its last in her arms. She heard the shrill cry of the deserted little one, she looked at the little creature, cold and lifeless in her arms, whose

voice was silent in her ears for ever, and then up at the clear blue sky.

Still the voice came to her, and believing, in her simplicity, that the gods had sent her another baby in the place of him they had taken, she followed in the direction of the sound, and there lay the little one, just the age of him she mourned. Lifting him from the earth, she placed her own child in the grave, and putting the new found one to her breast, thanked the gods for their gift.

Hastening home, she carefully tended the child, and brought him up for four years, when she, too, died, and the child was again cast upon the world ; this time with no such good luck as before. The people who had kept silence for his mother's sake now scrupled not to taunt the little deformed creature, and turned away from him with superstitious horror, calling him an offspring of the Evil Spirit.

For weeks the neglected, starving child stayed in the hut his mother had inhabited,

hiding away when he saw people coming, knowing well the reception he would meet with if he shewed himself. He was, as I said, only four years old at this time; so even this circumstance bespeaks the force of his intellect, which could so early judge of danger, or good and evil,

Days and weeks passed by, and the hut fell in ruins round the cold hearth, and the child, already almost on the same level as the wild *beasts*, took refuge in the woods, where he wandered about naked, eating the wild roots and berries, and sleeping under rocks or in holes of the earth.

Years went by, but he only increased in ugliness and deformity, and, moreover, was covered with disease and sores, such as only this unfortunate nation appears subject to.

It is not much to be wondered at that in this degraded position he should become even as the brutes that perish, and desperately wicked, exceeding even the most renowned in his evil ways.

I have said before that the dances of the islanders were of such an evil tendency as to oblige the first missionaries to insist upon their suppression. One of these, named the Hula Hula, was considered, even among themselves, as being too shocking to perform, except on special occasions, and then under cover of night, in caves, or dark groves.

It was in this Pauiki most excelled, and great was the fame of his deeds ; so great that it reached the ears of the King and Queen, in those days, as deeply sunk in wickedness as their poorest subjects.

Pauiki received an order to visit the Court, and, when seen, their Majesties were so much delighted by his grotesque figure and witty answers that they retained him about their persons, much in the same light dwarfs and jesters were kept about our own Court in earlier days.

Years went on, the dwarf became of great renown, and even ruled the monarch himself ; indeed, nothing was or could be done without

his will and sanction, and everything was done that could be to exalt and raise him in men's eyes, and this as a reward for his great and shocking wickedness.

The first authorized mission reached Kailue in 1820, and after working and prospering for some time, attracted the notice of the King and Queen, in both of whose hearts a desire to inquire into the truth of the new God was awakened, so much so that they set off to the station where some of the missionaries were established, to hear for themselves. Of course the Court went with their Majesties, and with it Pauiki. Here he heard and reviled the Holy Word, and here, too, he fell desperately sick ; at last his sickness was pronounced a malignant fever, and all fled from him except those whose orders were to drive him forth into the forest away from the presence of men.

What strange and painful reflections must have risen in the poor sick wretch's heart, as he crawled forth beneath the sheltering

trees, driven like a dog from his master's presence, forsaken by all who had so lately called him their friend, and sought his companionship. None to speak a word of comfort, or soothe the terrible pains that wrung the bitter tears from his eyes. The very beasts of the forest passed him by, as if afraid to touch such an evil morsel; and sick even to weariness of life, he twice attempted to put an end to it, but each time was prevented by what seemed a trivial occurrence, but was in reality the hand of God restraining him. There were greater things before him.

After a few days' suffering, he managed to build a small shelter of green boughs, and covered it with leaves; into this he crawled and lay down, hoping to die.

While lying there, his thoughts were continually drawn to the words he had heard spoken by the strange preachers, and some even he repeated to himself, wondering what they could mean.

Involuntarily, he used to repeat such sen-

tences, or even words, as he remembered, aloud, stringing them together the best way he could.

Day followed day, he grew weaker and more helpless, his little store of bread-fruit, which he had taken into the hut, was gone, and he had no strength to search for more. A day passed without food or water, and all night he lay looking at the quiet stars and wondering whether there really was a second life such as the preachers told of.

Another day broke, rolled on, and closed. Surely, he thought, this is the last, and felt glad to think it was so near, and first of all in his thoughts rose a glad feeling that he would know whether the missionaries told the truth or not, and, thinking thus, he again repeated some of their sayings.

It happened that at this moment a native, who had been converted and made a teacher by the missionaries, was passing. The sad tones of the voice reached his ears; he recognized it as the voice of pain, and, thinking

he might be useful, he drew nearer. As he approached the hut the words became audible, and to his great surprise he heard the words of Scripture spoken in his native tongue.

After listening, and almost doubting the accuracy of his own understanding, he stooped and looked under the green boughs—he started back. Could that frightful being stretched upon the ground be a living, breathing creature; a man even such as he was, and, as it appeared, a Christian?—he dare not think so. But, while uncertain, the voice spoke again, and again he stooped and gazed; it was quite true, the horrible, ghastly lips moved, and suddenly the bloodshot eyes turned full upon him.

Then the voice changed, and he was addressed in the most horrible language that tongue could invent, and bid to go away and leave the dying in peace.

Praying to God to direct him, he listened until the sufferer seemed exhausted, and then, creeping in, knelt beside him, and gazed com-

passionately upon the poor wretch now too weak even to speak to him.

With kind words and gentle actions he sought to alleviate his pain, raising up and placing a pillow of fresh grass under his head, while he sought pure water, and bathed his limbs, pouring a few drops between his parched and sore lips. There was a gleam of light in the eyes as they gazed up in his, and when the tongue spoke it was with some simple words of thanks.

“Who are you, friend?” asked the good Samaritan, “I heard you speaking Holy words ; are you one of us?”

“I am Pauiki, the Queen’s friend,” muttered the sick man with a last remnant of pride.

The stranger started back. He knew Pauiki by reputation, and shuddered to think of being so near him ; but then the words of Scripture—what could they mean? —again he spoke :

“Pauiki, why did I hear you speaking

the words spoken by the good white teachers? Were you mocking them at the door of death?"

"No, I was wondering if they spoke true, and glad to think I would so soon find it out."

The stranger fell upon his knees, and thanked God that he had brought him there; then, sitting down, he told Pauiki all the teachers had said to him, and the good things they had taught him, repeating a great many texts and hymns as he thus spoke.

One or two of these came like familiar music upon Pauiki's ear, and he soon forgot his pain and distress in listening. When the other had done, Pauiki told him this, and begged him to come again. This request was easily granted, and day after day the comforter sat by the sick man's bed until he had, by God's mercy, converted him from the greatest of sinners into one of God's own children, one ready to take up the cross and follow him.

While this change was being wrought in Pauiki's mind, an equally great one was going on in his body, which, purified by his long illness, was becoming whole and free from disease ; and, as strength returned, he felt a new vigour in every limb. One thing only never improved, and that was the dreadful pain in his eyes, so that he could not look for many minutes at an object without suffering.

At last he was able to walk, and accompanied his friend to a neighbouring hut, from thence to a missionary station, where he heard the word of God. Day after day he attended the prayer-meetings, and finding he could not do enough without being able to read, he asked and obtained permission to attend the church school ; here among little children, he sat poring over his lesson until a disease affecting his eyes became so much increased that he lost his sight altogether.

Now, indeed, his condition might be imagined most deplorable, but Pauiki had

found the only true peace, and learnt to be thankful under any circumstances, and to acknowledge that all is for the best.

Nothing daunted by the want of sight, he committed to memory verse after verse, and, gradually, whole books of the New Testament and Psalms, getting friends to read them to him ; and to such an extent did his memory carry him that I was told he never required a verse to be read more than twice, sometimes only once.

Satisfied with his devotion to their cause, the missionaries baptized him by the name of Bartimeus, and shortly afterwards ordained him a Minister of the Word. I have been told that his eloquence was almost super-human, and the pathos with which he dwelt on the sins and temptations which beset us on every side, and into which our weakness leads us, the most touching thing one could imagine.

Hundreds of his countrymen flocked to hear him, and hundreds went away believing.

The missionaries saw, with surprise and delight, how his words affected his countrymen, when their own passed away unnoticed. The secret was simple enough ; Bartimeus spoke to them in the imagery of their own wild language. Flowers, birds, and even the elements served as illustrations, and brought his parables before his hearers' senses. Men listened and wondered ; he spoke from a full and enthusiastic heart, and great was his reward.

Such was the life of this extraordinary man, and, as such, a lesson to all, both to take home to ourselves, and apply to those we deem of a lower place in the human race than ourselves.

It was on this island I first saw the native game of bowls, and another very much resembling that which we know as quoits. The first is performed by several men, *champions from each tribe*, and the bowl is a round whetstone, about a pound weight, beautifully polished and glazed. Quoits are the favourite

amusement, and are made of a flat oblong piece of polished slate. They display great skill at this game, and are delighted when they beat (which they generally do) an Englishman.

Talking of glazing, I ought to have mentioned that they have a method of glazing the native tappa, and making it have much the same appearance as oil-cloth. I tried to obtain one of these, but did not succeed, partly from the hasty visit we paid, and partly because very few of the natives possess them.

All the Sandwich Islanders display great ingenuity in their handiwork, and when one remembers the fact that their instruments consist of a sharp stone or shell, it is perfectly astonishing to notice the pretty carved ornaments they contrive to adorn themselves with, in the shape of necklaces and armlets, while their spears are covered by grotesque representations of war and hunting, though from the fact of there being no wild animals except hogs and dogs, it becomes an interesting en-

quiry as to where or how they obtain an idea of the creatures they take so much pleasure in representing. If you ask them, they only shake their heads, and say they do not know, that their grandfathers drew them, and so do they.

CHAPTER II.

“ As they drew nigh the land which now was seen
Unequal in its aspect here and there,
They felt the freshness of its growing green,
That waved in forest tops and smoothed the air.”

BYRON.

OWHYHIE, or Hawaii, is the largest of the group, is very fertile, and under the management of the largest number of farmers. Of these, the greatest number are Dutchmen.

We anchored in Byron’s Bay at sunset. This consists of a reef of coral rocks, about half a mile broad, through one part of which there is a channel three-quarters of a mile wide. On one side of the harbour, the mountains, of which the mighty volcano of Manna Kea, or, as it is sometimes called, Killaway, forms the principal, rise in a gradual slope,

while, to the south and east, they form a perpendicular bluff. From our anchorage I counted seven streams, averaging about two hundred feet in width, all falling over this cliff, and forming pretty waterfalls, whose murmur made the night musical, and, with the dancing moonlight, helped to while away my midnight watch.

The first dawn of day, in such a climate and harbour, is always the most delightful hour of the day, and, fully appreciating it, I was always on deck ready to pay my bow to the god of day. And certainly, on this morning, I was well rewarded for my early hours, and, as the rosy curtain was furled in the dark blue sky of night, and, borne by unseen hands, gathered out of sight, leaving the golden field to greet the god, I thought no wonder the Persians worshipped the sun. I was well nigh inclined myself, but only gave it a blessing as the source of health and wealth to mankind.

Gradually, the bright tints left the sky,

lingered awhile upon the mountains, just kissed the low grounds with a morning greeting, and passed away.

Then came the hour of landing. I had leave, not for one day only ; no, lucky fellow, I was to cross the island, and meet the ship at Karakakooa Bay, seeing, by this means, the volcano, and most interesting portion of the island.

I was accompanied by one of the lieutenants, the chaplain, and assistant-surgeon. We hired a couple of guides at Hilo, and supplying ourselves with as much provision as we deemed necessary to carry, set off on our journey—little anticipating the enterprise we were so lightly undertaking, though I, for one, after it was over, knew the meaning of the Captain's laugh, as he said :

“Oh, yes, see the crater, by all means ! Fine sight, fine sight ! I've been there.”

So have I now, and don't advise any one to undertake such an expedition in a hurry, and with guides to carry grub. Our first night

was spent in a native hut—and such a hut ! The open air would have been paradise in comparison, and I would gladly have had recourse to it, had it not rained in torrents the whole night, and made a shelter absolutely necessary. Thus we had to sit or lie it out the best way we could ; rather a difficult matter, for many reasons.

First and foremost, the hut was full of smoke, and choking with the smell of the natives ; the floor was crawling with fleas, and, in a few seconds there was not a spot upon my poor body they had not attacked. In vain I rubbed, and tumbled, sat up, and lay down again ; the brutes grew even more and more insatiable ; and, almost frantic, I got up and rushed into the open air. A regular deluge was pouring down. I was wet to the skin in three minutes, and my tormentors were either put to flight or drowned ; it mattered little which. Suffice it they had gone ; and with my dripping armour, I succeeded in getting repose for the remainder of the night.

The inhabitants do not indulge in much washing, and to the neglect of this is attributed a great proportion of the disgusting diseases which are so prevalent. Besides this, they keep their huts and food in such a deplorable state of filth that it was no wonder to me when I heard of and saw the state of the people themselves.

They offered us taro and pai for breakfast, but we could not touch it—and, content with a biscuit and cocoa-nut each, we proceeded, leaving a small quantity of tobacco as payment for our night's lodging.

The country was beautiful on every side; forests of acacias perfumed the air, bending over our pathway, and shedding their flowery showers upon our heads, the stems and lower branches affording support to numberless creepers; the tree-fern, too, mingled its feathery beauty. Flowers of every hue painted the green sward, which, in many places, was perfectly scarlet with the mountain-strawberry, and whole acres of raspberry trees hung loaded

with fruit. Upon these we breakfasted, the doctor all the time telling us we were sure to get cholera, but, nevertheless, helping himself as well as the best of us.

At first, everything about our journey looked easy and prosperous, and we hastened on, laughing at the forebodings of some far-sighted friends, who, though never going anywhere, act upon Sheridan's well-known advice, who, when a friend grumbled about not being able to go to see some particular place, answered :

“Oh, think you've seen it, and say so.” Looking at the smooth mountain, I had laughed at difficulty, and was now about to experience that of the ascent.

When we began to ascend the mountain, the scenery changed perceptibly at every stoppage, while the track (road there was none) grew worse and worse. The occasional glimpse of a wild dog or bull enlivened the scene—of both there are large numbers, particularly the latter, which do not scruple to

attack you if you come in their way or cross them.

Wild dogs were so numerous a year or two ago that the government began to poison them ; it was well they did so, as the dogs, by killing almost every calf that was dropped, would, if left, have in the end exterminated the cattle.

We had a pretty narrow escape from one of these ourselves ; just as we were turning a rather sharp rock, we had barely time to clamber up a bank, when an enormous bull rushed down with about twenty dogs yelling and screeching at his heels. His head was well down, and his horns pointed forward ; nothing could have saved me if I had been a moment later, and as I held 'on to my horse's neck (we were almost perpendicular) I could not but feel something like a shudder. However, there was no time for thought ; a loud shout made me start, and thinking something had happened to one of the party following, I dashed round

the rock, just in time to see the bull rising to his feet, with half a dozen dogs clinging to his neck and throat; but, exciting as such a scene was, there was another to me still more so, for just below the bank, and caught between two trees, hung the doctor's horse, struggling horribly in his death agony. He had been regularly embowelled, having, in trying to avoid the bull, gone too near the side of the path. The bull seemed at first inclined to pass, but suddenly turning, plunged his horns into the horse's stomach; the sudden stop and shock upset them both, and in trying to extricate himself, the bull rolled half over the embankment, but the horse alone fell, whilst the other recovered his feet, only, however, to meet fresh danger—his mortal enemies were upon him, clinging like bees. In vain he stamped and tossed his head, dripping with the blood of the poor horse, the dogs held gallantly on, themselves maddened by the taste of this very blood.

A minute or two passed—I could stand

it no longer; I saw, too, Gordon, the lieutenant, clutching his revolver, and mine was in my hand—I held it up, he nodded, and we both fired. The bull looked steadily at us for a moment, then, as if he had forgotten the dogs, down he came. Bang went the barrels, and this time with better effect; he stopped short, wavered for a minute, tried to turn, and then stumbled and fell. There was a general rush of the dogs, their sharp teeth were buried in his hide, while the hot breath was still gushing like jets of steam from his nostrils. It was a horrid sight, one I sickened at as I gazed with a sort of fascination, wishing I had anything with which to put the bull out of agony, and yet fearing the dogs, which, if disturbed, might prove even more dangerous than the larger animal. While wishing, I saw Gordon break down a large branch, and wrap a cloak round his left arm, in the hand of which he held a long Guacho knife, one I knew he had won as a bet from a great Buenos-Ayrean hunter. I saw it all

in an instant—he was going to stab the bull ; jumping down, I too got a branch, and with my cloak as shield was at his side. I had no knife except a large pocket one ; this might, however, help me if the dogs proved dangerous.

We charged together, and Gordon plunged his knife into the poor beast ; he had profited by his South American hunting, and knew the spot to strike right well. Now, however, came the difficulty ; the dogs had not moved from their meal, only looking up with glaring eyes, and shewing the blood-stained fangs as they saw us approach. Then down came the branch, with all the power of Gordon's arm ; one brute curled over with a broken back, and two more slunk howling away. My stroke was not so true, but still it told ; and now the chaplain and guides came to our aid, all similarly armed ; Gordon all the while laying about him as if threshing corn. We had a sharp fight, but came off victorious, killing four dogs, and putting the rest to

flight, though, as they went down the bank, they soon fell upon the carcass of the horse, and, I daresay, thought themselves great fools to fight for one beast when another as good lay within a few yards.

After resting for a minute or two, we suddenly remembered the doctor, and began to grow anxious as to his fate ; an anxiety that was soon relieved by his appearance *in propria persona*.

He had watched the fight, but had enough of it at the beginning, and warily remained out of sight, thinking prudence the better part of valour. After enjoying a good laugh at his expense, we set about cutting a steak for supper from the bull, but soon gave it up to the natives, who had not the same sort of stomachs as we had, and seemed to enjoy the work as much as we disliked it.

Evening was again coming on, and our proposed quarters for the night were still some way up the mountain. So on we went, at as good a pace as the path would permit ;

by no means a fast one. Huge blocks of lava barricaded our passage at every hundred yards, while the sharp stones cut the horses' *legs and hoofs* unmercifully. Poor beasts! we were to leave them at the foot of the last ascent, as it is impossible to ride further. In fact, it then becomes as much as a man can accomplish with the help of both hands and feet.

But I must not anticipate. Daylight, as I said, was fading away; but we had the prospect of a full moon in an hour after dark, so, by waiting a short time, we might continue our journey to the cave.

The last streak of daylight was soon gone; an intense darkness, like a black veil, fell upon the earth, and not a single object was visible; not even our horses' heads, although we sat holding the bridles, and even stroking their faces. All was dark, and, for a time, silent; then the air became filled with the dismal howls of the wild dogs and other nocturnal animals. I never heard such wild, ghost-like sounds; my

blood curdled, and I almost felt my hair rising like poor Hamlet's.

In the midst of my cogitations, the lieutenant began a capital imitation of Kean in Hamlet, and kept us listening until a faint glow began to brighten the horizon, gradually increasing until the full-orbed moon herself sailed forth, and took possession of her heavenly throne. The green leaves sparkled, and grew silvery beneath her smile; bright stars sprang out to welcome her, and we, poor earthbound mortals, mounted our horses, and continued our way, reaching a level plain in a short time, over which we proceeded a little quicker, although the beds of soft sand, into which our horses sank, distressed them much, and it was with difficulty we urged them to struggle on to the welcome cave.

Here we found a party of natives already assembled; the only good thing in this surprise being that a fire was lighted, and, consequently, we could cook our supper more speedily than we might otherwise have done.

The natives who had taken shelter here were bird-catchers, and were collecting little birds, from which the two bright golden feathers are taken, which the women weave into wreaths, and even cloaks. The bird is about the size of a blackbird, and under each wing is found the single golden feather so highly prized. These pretty little birds were found in enormous numbers. But although the demand for them has been considerably lessened since the introduction of European fashions, they seem to be dying out, and, like the inhabitants themselves, will soon be a thing of the past.

The native party watched our preparations for supper with great interest, and greedily devoured the remnants. Observing which, we made them a present of the rest of our beef, and retiring into a corner to sleep, had the satisfaction of seeing them roasting and eating it with great signs of gratification, and, in return, being presented with a bunch of the valued feathers.

At day-break we were again *en route*, and scrambling up the uneven sides of the volcano itself; now climbing down into a wide chasm, to get up the other side as best we could; now making a frantic leap over a narrow crack, down which a false step would have sent us from this world in double quick time; now slipping, or half smothered with some treacherous mass of lava which looked so firm that, trusting to it, we threw our whole weight forward, when smash, crash, and back we went, buried under a cloud of dust and pieces of rock!

Still our goal was nearing; the crater towered before us, and with a couple of hours more puffing and blowing we stood upon the brink, and looked down into what I had never fully realized, a sea of liquid everlasting fire.

I thought of Milton's description of Hell, and Gordon quoted the "Course of Time." Truly it was awful and sublime in the extreme. The crater is of an oblong form, three and a half miles in length, by twenty and a half in width.

It is in this volcano the famous goddess Pelee is said to reign, and scarcely will the natives approach its brink, fearful of incurring her displeasure ; and now, as we skirted along the edge, our guide (the other had taken back our horses to Pilo) shrank fearfully back, trembling violently when we approached close to the liquid fire itself.

What struck me as the most peculiar feature in the whole scene were two cones which rose black and high like chimneys in the midst of the boiling flood ; from these the lava rushes forth, flowing over their sides ; at other times, large masses of rock are ejected, and I have read several admirable descriptions by those who have been lucky enough to witness an eruption, which I was not.

We had not time to stay all night, much as we desired to do so ; but after collecting a few specimens of the lava hot from the crater, we bid it farewell and began our descent, and after some hard work reached a little cluster of huts called, if I remember right,

Keiva. Here we met with great kindness, and got a capital supper, with the great comfort of something like a bed upon which to rest our bruised and aching limbs.

It was nearly noon next day ere we mustered courage to set out on our walk to the missionary station of Whyhohino ; the cool sea breezes however somewhat refreshed us, and by the help of stout hearts and sticks we marched on. The road soon brought us to the sea-shore, and now our interest was awakened, as numerous native villages brightened the way, and we were constantly greeted by the ringing laugh of welcome and the usual salutations. Occasionally a bevy of girls would join in, their long dark hair interwoven with flowers, their loose blue dresses shewing their beautiful figures something like the famous Norah Creena. These accompanied us for a mile or two, laughing all the way, and trying to make us understand what they wished to say—a vain endeavour, and I dare say no great loss to us, for though picturesque

objects in their light dress and active movements, the morals of the fair ones do not permit much scrutiny.

Whyhohino is a small and scattered hamlet, surrounded by trees of a stunted growth, and by no means a very prepossessing spot. Here we again rested for the night, and heard many a traveller's tale from our kind host. We also got an introduction to a brother-labourer at Kailili, our next station, besides the loan of a couple of horses, which we were to ride by turns. This was a great help, and many were the thanks the good man received, not loud but deep. Reaching Kailili, we sent back the horses by our guide, *paid him his demand*, and hired a boat to make the rest of the journey by this easy mode of transit. This we accomplished in an incredibly short time, meeting with no rebuffs from wind or tide, and running along in splendid style.

Much to our delight, we sighted the good old —— just rounding into Karakakooa Bay from the south, as we did ditto from the

north. We had done our work beautifully, and had a day to spare. Many were the congratulations we received, although some of the hands professed to doubt our having ever reached the crater, until we pulled out our relics and convinced them by ocular demonstration. Karakakooa Bay is world-known, and has been painted both in colours and writing so often that there is nothing left to say. It has its own sacred memory, particularly to a sailor, and the spot where Cook fell is hallowed to us all; even the natives seem to hold it in a sort of awe, and bend their heads as they pass the spot. Wonderful stories are told of the fatal affray, and the subsequent fate of the Lono (Cook's name on the Island).

While at Karakakooa Bay, I had many opportunities of seeing the habits of the natives, and was even present at a truly primitive feast, given in honour of some great day or other.

The people began to gather at sunrise, men, women, and children, each bringing something

towards the picnic. The meeting place was a pretty dell between two enormous arms of the mountain. Nothing could exceed the picturesque beauty of the spot ; it was entirely enclosed by hills, lined with trees and flowers, through which sparkling streams found their way to join the rivulet flowing down the valley.

It was a strange sight. The groups of savages of every shade and colour, and shape of dress, all light-hearted, laughing and dancing, waiting for the business of eating, which part of the ceremony was also in preparation ; and as I had a fair chance of seeing their mode of roasting I shall here describe it. A hole is first dug, in which a large fire of branches is lighted, and kept replenished until the earth beneath and for some way round is quite hot ; the embers are then cleared away, and a pig, rolled and tied up in plantain leaves, is laid in the oven, a covering of sods is put over it, and it is then left to roast or steam, one side being roasted, the other

steamed. Sometimes, when they are in a hurry, as in the present case, another fire is lighted upon the top, and at a certain time (the cooks knowing from experience the moment) the fire is pulled aside, the sods removed, and the piggy opened out to view, his fragrant smell saluting the nostrils of the hungry watchers, who crowd round to see all they can of it.

Then the signal is given, and they all squat down in circles, wonderfully small considering that a whole pig is laid in the middle of each. My shipmates and I had a porker presented to us, and being provided with plates, knives, and forks of our own, we cut off a portion, much to the distress of our hospitable hosts, who could not understand why we did not take it all, and nearly forgot to eat it themselves, so great was their wonder on seeing the use we made of our knives, &c.

As soon as the bones of the pigs had been completely picked, poi was placed before the company. This we looked at, but found it impossible to eat, for it neither looked tempting,

nor were the accounts written of its preparation at all inviting. The way the natives eat it is by dipping a finger in, turning it quickly round, and bringing it back to the mouth well covered with a thick coating of the dirty white paste which composes the mixture. The operation reminded me of sundry forays upon the larder, and assaults upon a certain Alderney cow's milk, of whose cream the dairy maid was wont to boast, "That it wad hold a penny-piece."

After an extraordinary consumption of poi, sweet potatoes, and bread-fruit, and, as Mr. Weller feelingly remarked, "a wizable swelling" of a certain portion of the human frame divine, large calabashes of liquor were handed round,—at first only tasted, but soon drunk by the men.

This liquor is, as every one knows, prepared by chewing a root to a state of pulp, when they spit it out into a cocoa-nut shell and set it by to ferment.

It acts more upon the bodily strength than

upon the mind, for those who drink it soon become powerless, although they retain their senses, unless taking a large quantity. This drink is *said* to be an infallible cure for rheumatism for *those who will drink it*.

The natives soon discovered the believing capacity of the English, and have become such inveterate romancers, that I must warn any unfortunate traveller against crediting anything he hears. The natives are cunning enough to watch the gathering expression of wonder upon the stranger's face, and draw upon their imagination accordingly.

We spent three days in the bay, and then returned to Honolulu, where we found the steamer waiting, with the very unexpected order to cruise up as far as Petropaulovski, look in at the Amoor, from thence proceed to Vancouver's and there wait further orders. There was much discussion as to the cause of such a strange order, and one man who had been on the station during the Russian war, and had gone exactly the same

route, horrified us all by his dismal accounts. There was nothing for it, however—to hear was to obey ; so after laying in a store of fresh provisions at Honolulu, we weighed anchor ; and amidst the discharge of guns and waving of handkerchiefs we set off upon our weary voyage to the snowy regions, I, for one, with great reluctance. But such is a sailor's fate ; he is not only at the mercy of wind and tide, but of a pitiless Board, who are often more capricious still.

CHAPTER III.

“ Oh ! the whale is free of the boundless sea,
He lives for a thousand years,
He sinks to rest on the billow’s breast,
Nor the roughest tempest fears.

“ The howling blast as it rushes past
Is music to lull him to sleep,
And he scatters the spray in his boisterous play,
As he dashes through the deep.”

WHALER’S SONG.

Most of us were heartily tired of hearing the by no means euphonious name of Petro-paulovski, and many and various were the changes thereon rung by the sailors, all gradually subsiding into Pollyovsky.

We all thought it a great bore to go so far at such a late season of the year, and by no means relished such a roundabout way of reaching our winter quarters at Vancouver’s ; besides, as the voyage from the Sandwich

Isles would run to nearly a month, we should just look in at the place, and go off again on an equally long voyage to our destination. Moreover, the chance of being delayed by stormy weather was by no means cheering. This, added to the length of time during which we should receive no home tidings, was not calculated to put us in good humour; and we all started with very unwilling hearts.

At first, the weather was pretty fair; then there was a change. The thermometer fell, foggy nights set in, and, for a week, we were all shivering with cold, blowing our noses, and grumbliug about ear-aches. I believe I was almost the only man who escaped the latter tiresome complaint, and, saving a slight touch of ague, had nothing to put me out in *the cold way*.

As we were now getting into the very home of whales, everyone was on the look-out, anxious to be first to sight the monster. Scarcely any conversation went down except about whales and whalers; how they were

caught and cut up, the dangers of their pursuit, &c., each man telling a different story or quoting a different authority.

At last, one bright, sunny afternoon, the welcome shout was heard, and, in imitation of the true sporting phrase, the words, “There she blows!” were echoed through the ship. Then came a general rush, everyone asking, “Where? where?”

“There to windward, Sir.”

“But how many?”

“Three, Sir, at present.”

And in a short space the gentlemen were visible to all, going so rapidly that it was evident they would soon pass us pretty close.

On they came, their great carcasses well out of the water, now and then going down, and coming up again to spout, their black skins glittering in the sunshine.

Suddenly, they were alongside, and we could see them distinctly; and very ugly brutes they were. Their enormous mouths were closely shut, their lower lip folding over

the upper one. I saw them go down, one by one, with the force of a battering-ram, raising their tails high in the air, as if to give them impetus. They never went down except singly, and took it in regular turns.

Two of them, from their appearance and solicitude for each other, we settled must be mother and child, as it is well known that, until arrived at maturity, the cub seldom leaves its mother.

Just at dusk they parted from us, and it was two days or more before we saw another, and that was a dead one, round which millions of sea-birds and sharks were holding carousal.

It being an almost dead calm when we sighted the body, we sent off a boat to make an inspection, and a few of the fellows, whose olfactory nerves were none of the most delicate, volunteered, for the sake of the shooting.

The whale was tolerably far-gone, and exhaling a frightful stench, while the great over-eaten sharks sailed about, almost on the

surface of the water, looking at the boat with suspicious glances. One great brute, rather more voracious than his fellows, made a dash at the boat, and got a sharp reminder over the nose as thanks.

Several fine large albatrosses were shot, and it was now, for the first time, I had my attention drawn to a singular formation in the skull of this bird, namely, a narrow cavity just above the eye, which, I believe, acts as a reservoir in which the oil used to dress their feathers is retained. When first caught, nearly all birds of this class vomit a disagreeable sort of oily matter, much as the weasel tries to ward off an attack by emitting a pungent effluvia.

The surgeon told me, on my expressing some wonder as to the power of using this defence, that he had noticed the same formation years before, but hoped some one who understood ornithology would take it up some day.

Some account of the manner in which whalers set about their work, will, I think,

be interesting, and fill up the tedium of this account of a long voyage.

The taking of whales would seem to be a much older institution than many of us are aware of, there being records of it as far back as the time of King Alfred ; and mention therein is made of a certain valiant knight, who, amongst his numerous deeds of prowess, reckoned that of having been one of six who had killed sixty whales in two days.

In the earliest times of which we can hear anything of the North-west Indians, Norwegians, or Esquimaux, they were in the habit of using the fat and oil as food ; and the inhabitants of the Bay of Biscay have, from time immemorial, considered the whale's tongue as their greatest delicacy.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, the Dutch had carried whaling to great perfection, and had established a settlement at Smeeromberg, only eleven degrees from the North Pole, besides several others at convenient places. At each of these villages, they

erected store-houses, boiling and pressing vats to manufacture the oil ; an operation now carried on, on board the ship itself.

The Americans next took up the ball, and rumours reaching Europe of their great success, the governments of England and France fitted out several whalers, and, in 1788, England had the honour of opening the Pacific to the sperm fishery.

The crew of a whaler are not engaged on the ordinary hire principle, but each man has a per-centage upon what fish are taken ; thus, every one has an equal share in risks and profit. And assuredly there is risk, greater than any one who has not seen the monarch of the deep in his natural freedom can possibly imagine ; and scarcely a year passes without numberless fatal accidents.

As soon as a whale is observed by the look-out at the mast-head, three boats are launched immediately, everything being kept in perfect order, and placed in the boat beforehand. The crew is also ready told off, and everyone

is in the greatest excitement. Off they go, pulling with right good will, watching intently the movements of the whale.

If what is called a right one, he flukes, that is to say, lifts his tail, as we noticed our friends doing, and dives. As soon as he goes down, the boats scatter wide to watch his return. And now each man is breathless, every nerve strained ; the whale may appear anywhere, at any moment, and their first intimation may be by being heaved high in the air, or capsized by his coming alongside.

A capsize is, however, but lightly thought of, as every man forming a whaler's crew learns to swim, as part of his education, and can keep afloat for hours, waiting until the other boats can find time to pick him up. A more serious accident, however, often happens, and that is, when coming up near, a whale flukes right on the top of them ; in this case, the men seldom all escape, and many a gallant fellow goes down stunned, or with a broken limb.

When the whale is up again, the leading boat creeps up within range, and the chief officer stands ready in the bow, harpoon in hand. Whiz goes the deadly weapon, and, if a lucky hit, it is the only blow necessary ; and the result is instantly known by the colour of the spout ; if bloody, there is no need of another stroke.

Now, however, the real danger begins, and, though mortally wounded, the monster struggles long with death, and after floundering about on the surface for a time, goes down below, and makes a run for it.

The line attached to the harpoon acts as a tug line, and the little boat spins along, sometimes even under the water for a moment ; presently, the whale tires a little, and rises to breathe, the rope is quickly hauled in, and recoiled in the tubs, ready for another run.

If the first blow has been deep enough, unless a very old and strong fish, he does not often try a second run ; but if he shews fight

again, generally another boat comes up, and another deadly anchor drinks his life-blood.

His death-struggle, or "flurry," soon follows, and as soon as there is a symptom of this, the boats run back as far as their lines permit, and wait until life is extinct.

This "flurry" must be a terrific sight, for I have heard men say that the ocean, for miles round, was like the top of a boiling caldron, the water being one mass of blood and foam.

As soon as he turns on his back, all is over, and nothing remains but the satisfaction of cutting him up ; unless, as sometimes happens, he goes down ; in which case the boats must be cut away, and lose both lines and fish.

The carcass is hauled alongside the ship and secured by a thick chain, the reeve blocks always kept ready are made straight, and the cutting in tackle arranged ; steps are put over the side and secured, down which two or three men descend, each having a belt or rope across his chest in case of slipping, an accident

probable enough, and by no means pleasant, seeing that hundreds of sharks appear directly a whale is killed, and make rushes at the morsels which are broken off in cutting up, nay, often at the men themselves if they go too near water-mark.

The cutters use long-handled spades, and the work begins by dissecting the enormous lips ; as soon as one side is detached, hooks are fastened to it and it is hoisted up ; as it rises the men slit round by the jaw-bone, and the whole lip is thus raised and stowed away in the hold.

Next come the fore fins, then the upper lip, then the jaw, in which lies the article known as whalebone ; after that the throat, tongue, and lower jaw. This is the most difficult operation of all, there being such an enormous weight of fat attached to the root of the tongue that the tackling will frequently give way and the whole be lost.

Stripping off the blubber is easy work ; it is hoisted in long slices, and cut into smaller

pieces on reaching the deck ; there is a room or compartment devoted to this part, called the blubber-room.

All this work occupies a great deal of time, and during the interval millions of birds have appeared to claim their share, and cluster on every part of the carcass, screaming and fighting for the chips of blubber, eager for every morsel, and glutting themselves while they can, as they all seem to know by instinct that the instant the last piece of blubber is off, down will go the skeleton to the bottom like lead, and the sharks have it all their own way. Some whales yield nearly three hundred barrels of oil, and the state of the ship during the boiling, &c., may be better imagined than described. All the work is done on board, and at sea ; thus there is no loss of time, and as the flesh, after the oil is extracted, acts as fuel, there is no need of carrying any of the latter. The ignorance of this most useful fact was very probably the principal reason why the earlier whalers always ran for the nearest port and

landed the blubber to be prepared on shore, it being obviously impossible to carry fuel enough for such work. The portion of the deck upon which the furnace is placed, is thickly bricked over and kept cool by pumping water, and as soon as the last barrel of oil is filled, a regular cleaning up takes place, and everything is thoroughly scrubbed and put in order for another cruise.

It is inside the upper jaw of the whale that the whalebone lies, and answers during its owner's life-time as a sort of strainer; it resembles slabs laid edgeways in the mouth, and is covered with something like coarse hair, in which the curious little animals forming its principal food are entrapped. These are a kind of small shrimp, the form of which is only discovered by looking at them with a magnifying glass, as in reality they resemble a very minute drop of blood, and when floating on the surface are dead and clotted together in thousands; they go by the name of "right whale food," but are properly of the medusæ tribe.

When a whale is feeding, he opens his mouth, and keeping it so, rushes through a shoal of these creatures, doubling up his lip when he thinks he has got enough. I saw one or two at their dinner, and was very much amused by the exercise they took—going right ahead for some time, then back, then forward or round for about two hours, when I suppose they had satisfied their appetites.

As we drew near the goal of our voyage, the whales increased in number, and a day or two before we sighted land, I witnessed a wonderful exhibition, namely a regular "school" of whales playing upon the surface of the ocean ; rolling and tumbling about like so many kittens, sometimes jumping clear out of the water, and coming down like thunder, the whole ocean giving me a good idea of what an eruption from the bottom of the sea would appear, when mighty rocks were thrown up, but to fall back into the water again.

It is extraordinary the height a whale can throw himself above the water, and when we

first caught sight of the lively group I could scarcely believe my eyes.

But I must leave the whales to their sports, and tell of ourselves. We were within one hundred and seventy miles of the port of Petropaulovski, with the pleasant prospect of entering the bay at day-break next morning.

The weather was now intensely cold, and the prospect of even a week at the port anything but agreeable; besides, a chance of having to winter there was held out by the growlers, and kept us in a continual state of feverish dread. I had no fancy for sledges or ice, and as I had been dreaming of the mild climate, sunny shores, and pleasant society of Vancouver's and Valparaiso, from which place the wide wintry Pacific now divided us, every moment seemed an age, and the very idea of staying at Petropaulovski made me shudder.

The water was now covered with birds of every size, many of which I had never seen. We had splendid pistol practice, and I made a great collection of skins, which unluckily were

destroyed on their passage home. The thermometer suddenly rose several degrees, so that we on night-watch began to look a little more cheerfully at things, but alas ! the wind changed too and came dead in our teeth.

When we first sighted the white-covered mountains of Kamtschatka they were absolutely bathed in fire, which gradually altered in shade as old Sol opened his eye upon the world around us. The breeze too fell, and for a couple of hours we lay like a log upon the water, witnessing, by way of compensation, one of the most beautiful sunrises I could have imagined ; as the red light cleared away and the sun ruled triumphant, a light breeze sprang up and we were gliding triumphantly through the narrow entrance or gut.

High land rises on either hand, and on the right is the light-house and small fortification, once I believe considered pretty strong, though it proved a mere myth during the war, and has never regained its *éclat*.

The sail up the bay gave us a glimpse of

some splendid scenery, wild, bold, and striking: the right side being one continuous range of heights, and the left much softer and lower. At the head of the bay where the Awatski river flows in, there is a different appearance in the country, which is low, and the river runs for some distance very shoal, so much so, that only flat-bottomed boats can reach the mouth, close to which stands the village.

Almost facing the entrance is the mouth of the inner harbour, quite a natural dock, formed by a couple of mounds called the Saddle. These run parallel with the beach; a low sand spit running at right angles to them leaves a clear and deep narrow entrance. Along the Saddle are several batteries corresponding with others along the bay, and ships lying close behind the sand-spit would, in action, be completely protected from being hulled near the water-line, and also have the advantage of such shot as fell short striking the sand-bank, and thus either passing over them or remaining embedded.

The village here is called Valovski, and is a small fishing place, with some government iron buildings, and one church. A lake, famous as the resort of wild ducks, lies at the back of the village.

Between this point and the light-house at the mouth of the harbour, you see the mighty volcano of Avatski, towering to the heavens, sending forth incessant clouds of smoke and flame, while streams of boiling lava well over its sides. This sight is grand and awe-inspiring at night, as it sheds its radiance across the bay.

There is a low range of mountains between the water and volcano, the whole of which lay white under the heel of winter; and I was told that, even in summer, the inland face of these hills is covered with snow.

The harbour is full of fish, and during June and July immense numbers of salmon and herrings are taken, many of the former being of an incredible size, some upwards of seventy pounds.

When H.M.S. 'Monarch' was there, during the war, a friend of mine told me they caught quantities of both, and one salmon weighed seventy-five pounds ; while, in one haul, the net came in, broken in many places by the enormous weight ; and, on another occasion, they could not get the net in, and were obliged to underrun it, that is to say, pull up the under string and lower the upper, and thus capsize the cargo. Even in this case, they destroyed thousands, and for days the bay was covered with their dead bodies.

The town of Petropaulovski lies about seven miles from the bay, delightfully sheltered on all sides. There is a Greek church near the Government House ; the barracks are good and large. The Government buildings are all roofed in with iron, and painted bright red ; the sides are made of logs, laid over each other, and filled in with moss and grass.

A great portion of the town consists of the

huts of the Kamtschatales, and is very dirty and poor; the yours, as the winter huts are called, looking little better than heaps of earth. They are sunk down beneath the surface, like those of several Indian nations to whom I shall have to allude. There are two memorial pillars erected by the Russian Government, one to La Perouse, the second to Behring; the first is a metal obelisk, the second, a wooden imitation.

When we arrived, the sledging season was just commencing, and I soon had the offer of an excursion in one to try what I thought of it.

The sledge itself is long and light, with the seat not more than eighteen inches from the ground. It is very uncomfortable to sit in, particularly in such a shower of hail as I was honoured with. You are exposed to the full force of the blast, as there is not the slightest shelter or protection against wind or weather. The least projection or obstacle upsets the sledge, and you suddenly find yourself plung-

ing about in the snow, while, possibly enough, the dogs continue their gallop, perfectly regardless of the driver's shouts.

The dogs are fine animals, and I thought very interesting. They stand rather over twenty-three inches in height, often twenty-five, have a pointed muzzle, pricked ears, and broad, sagacious head; the body is low, and admirably adapted for work and exposure, being protected by long hair, and a thick, warm undergrowth of dun-coloured wool. They seem indigenous to the country, and are found wild among the hills, in which state their habits are identical with those of the wolf, an animal they closely resemble in appearance.

The dog sleeps during the day, and can, it is asserted, see better at night. He has the most singular voice I ever heard, something between the howl of a wolf and the bark of a dog, a horribly unearthly sound, ringing through the stillness of a clear, frosty night, and echoed by the rocks, which,

when laden with snow, give a strange, smothered answer back.

Trains of dogs vary from seven to eleven and fifteen, and are kept by everyone. They are tied singly, or in pairs, to stakes, in the sledging season, but in summer are permitted to range about and find for themselves. Then they subsist principally upon fish, which they catch as easily as an otter does. They evince a strong sense of enjoyment at the approach of winter, welcoming the first fall of snow with every demonstration of canine delight. Perhaps this is instinct, telling them of the shelter and food afforded in return for their light work, as their owners now take care to feed them; except only on a journey, when the idea prevails that they work better when kept on short commons, and I was told they would perform journeys of three or four weeks' duration upon fare scarcely sufficient to keep them from starvation.

The teams are always uneven in number, from the reason that the most trustworthy

dog is placed singly in the van as leader, and guides all the rest, obeying, from custom and training, his driver's slightest word. They go at a tremendous rate, and over everything ; up and down hill ; it seems all one to them.

Sometimes they become unruly, and take the law into their own hands ; and this is almost invariably the case when they scent a herd of deer. Then, nothing will restrain them ; off they go in hot pursuit, giving the unlucky traveller an excursion he little anticipated, or, sometimes, leave him rolling helplessly in the snow, to scramble, if he can, to some sheltering hut.

My journey was only of a few hours' duration, and yet my back ached for days after, while from the swift passage through the air laden with keen frost, the skin peeled off my nose and cheeks, nor could I sleep at night on account of the smarting and pains. A cure, however, was effected next day, by the application of a coating of veritable bear's grease, the possession of which was obtained in this wise.

Some of the fellows spied a bear stealing about on the mountain side, and immediately got leave to land and try their luck. After a couple of hours' hard walking, partly through and partly over snow, they reached the spot where Master Bruin had been promenading, and were deliberately rounding the ascent, which was rather steep, when, from a bank above, they were greeted by a regular avalanche of snow, in the midst of which, and while busy shaking their eyes and necks free, down slid the bear, right in among them. Rather startling, to say the least of it!

I imagine he had got as great a fright as they did, or would not have turned tail so ignobly as he did, making a violent and very insane effort to jump up the cliff again—an effort ending in a second fall. This time the party were ready with a warm reception, and four or five rifle balls crashed into his shaggy carcass. One of them piercing his heart, he fell over without a struggle. Poor fellow, he proved acceptable in every way, par-

ticularly to me, in the shape of cold cream, and I suffered no more from the wind and hail.

This was the only bear we killed, or indeed saw. Perhaps they are driven down by the storms from their mountain retreat later in the year ; at any rate we heard marvellous accounts of them from other ships, and were scarcely believed when we said we had only seen one.

After ten days at Petropaulovski, we bid it a long farewell, and with cheery hearts set sail for Vancouver's. Even ~~one~~ breezes seemed to rejoice that they had got us on the wing again, and never failed us all the long voyage, which I believe was one of the fastest ever performed, and during which we only used our steam three or four times, and that only to keep us under weigh.

CHAPTER IV.

“Waters to their resting place serene
Came freshening and reflecting all the scene,
(A mirror in the depth of flowery shelves),
So sweet a spot of earth you might, I ween,
Have guessed some congregation of the elves
To sport by summer moons had shaped it for themselves.”

GERTRUDE OF WYOMING.

WE had, as I said before, a glorious passage from Petropaulovski, and passed just within sight of Queen Charlotte’s Island, only near enough, as it was remarked, to “swear we had seen it, and tell everything we liked about it.” Next to this came the cluster of islands, or, more properly speaking, rocks, lying at the extreme northern point of Vancouver’s, named after Beresford and Scott, and then we sighted the green mountains of the island itself, delighting our eyes by gazing on the refreshing green, which looked, to my sea-worn

vision, brighter, richer, and fairer than aught I had ever seen before.

Towards evening we were off Nootka, with a very heavy sea running in upon a high rock-bound coast ; so that, the wind freshening, we kept well out, and lay to waiting until daylight, to make our way down, entering the straits of Juan de Fuca next day at seven o'clock, P.M. the snowy crown of Mount Olympus glowing red with the parting touch of old Sol, and Becher Head rising on the left. As we ran round and cast anchor in the little harbour of Victoria, we felt inclined to call Olympus the monarch of mountains, and Vancouver's the most charming spot on earth.

Victoria is like all new towns, very white and straggling, very formal and uncomfortable, but with the happy prospect of being beautiful at some future day, having, as it has, all the natural advantage of situation, climate, and material, with a luxuriant vegetation to give it additional beauty.

The situation has been admirably chosen, and from the slope to the bay there is no need of drainage, nature taking that work in her own hands. The harbour runs inland some distance, and is spanned at the town by a fine bridge, which forms the means of communication with the interior.

Such was the town and harbour, and such the first object that greeted us with returning daylight. Then followed a telescopic inspection of the country ; we took in fields of grain, some bending ripe and ready, others cut and standing in those dear old English “stooks,” among which I’ve had many a game at Hide and Seek, and behind which I’ve often lain hid to get a shot at a blackcock late in the season. Next to these came real turnip drills, and sheep penned in among them, reminding me forcibly that partridges were found in Vancouver’s, and that the game laws did not extend to this portion of our dominions. Moreover, to enhance our happiness, it was now September, and it was something to

think that we too might bag our partridges, even as those at home were doing ; and revel in fancy among the home preserves.

Forests of oak and pine softened the distance, and clothed the mountains, which from this point tower up far inland, and seem to mingle with the skies.

Although the harbour of Esquimault was to be our anchorage, we remained a couple of days at Victoria, and then performed the rest of our voyage.

Esquimault is just round the headland upon which the fort is erected. The entrance is high and rocky, almost blocked up by an island, which, though rendering navigation a little troublesome at times, yet, with a fair wind and good pilot, is the cause of no danger ; and once over the bar you enter a lovely sheet of water, reminding you strongly of Loch Katrine, and just as calm, though without the pretty islands that people the latter.

Inside it is all plain sailing ; you glide along for seven miles (up to the head), passing grey

rocky headlands, and glittering little bays, the scenes of peace and enjoyment. The latter feeling is indeed predominant, and gladly, indeed, do we welcome such a spot after such a long weary voyage. How enchanting this scene must be to those who, having come direct round the Horn, reach such a haven, and feel there is peace in the world!

There being about eight fathoms close up to the shore, ships of all sizes can anchor, almost touching the land, and the whole surface of the harbour was alive with boats of every shape, some rowed by native fishermen, others by girls, clad in scanty bark petticoats, and painted to the eyes with a sort of red clay.

The admiral, being a thorough-going old sailor, made a close inspection of us, and pronounced us in capital order; for the present we were to remain where we were, but from some hints let fall by the captain, reports began to steal about that we should not stay very long; so we determined to make the best of our time. Vancouver's is every day becoming

a place of greater interest, and people at home are thinking more favourably of this pretty island; considering all this, I hope I shall not be looked upon as a bore, if I endeavour to satisfy my enquiring friends, and tell them all I know, saw, or heard about the place.

Great and many have been the changes wrought in this island, and at this point, and before I say anything of its present state, a few words about its discovery and prospects will be useful in opening out what is to come.

The discovery was long disputed by the Spaniards, and as little was really known of this portion of the American Western coast, the merit was not much valued, and saving now and then when by chance recalled, neither England nor Spain troubled themselves about the honour.

In 1776, the British Parliament, seized with an enterprising spirit, offered the magnificent reward of £20,000 to whoever would discover

a means of water communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Captain Cook, already famous from his second voyage round the world, volunteered to command the expedition, provided only the Government furnished him with two good ships, and permitted him to select his own officers, and superintend in person the outfitting of his little squadron.

He visited Nootka Bay, and supposed it to be on the mainland of North America, and concluding a little hastily that his bearings must be correct, left the island and ran across to the Sandwich Islands. Here he lost his life; but on the return of the ships to England, with the exact and clearly stated logs kept by the Commander, as well as many specimens of the produce of those parts of the globe, as yet unknown, the whole continent became interested. Russia sent her ablest navigators to the far off region, and other countries added their mite.

At this time, the English trade on the

Pacific was appropriated by large mercantile corporations. Having their rights secured by Act of Parliament, these companies bore the respective titles of the South Sea and East India Companies. The discoveries made by the first company along the west coast of America were of the utmost value ; Dixon, the captain of a vessel belonging to another society, came upon and named Queen Charlotte Islands, and the passage directly north immortalized his name.

In 1788, some ships chartered by the Bengal firm and accompanied by Captain Douglas, commanding the 'Iphigenia,' ran up the straits of Juan de Fuca, and took formal possession in the King of England's name. Still the existence of an island was unknown, inasmuch as in one account of this voyage it is said :—

"In the channels of this Archipelago (Juan de Fuca) there are islands of ice, which we may venture to say never have been formed on the western side of America, which pos-

seses a mild and moderate climate, so that their existence cannot be reconciled to any other idea than that they received their formation in the eastern seas, and have drifted by tides and currents through the passage for whose existence we are contending."

This opinion, suiting exactly the ideas of Government and merchants, was eagerly seized upon, as people readily believe what they earnestly wish. The matter was allowed to rest, until the voyage of Vancouver in 1792. He entered into the Straits of de Fuca, and, after what was then considered a dangerous and marvellous voyage, settled all doubts, and banished all hopes of the desired passage. The strait was only one dividing a large and fertile island from the continent.

The disappointment occasioned by Vancouver's intelligence damped his reception in England, and the dangers he had encountered were hastily glossed over, no one caring to look the bad news in the face, by bringing him prominently before the public.

Early in the spring of 1843, the Hudson's Bay Company established a settlement on the island, landing Mr. Finlayson with forty men under his charge, thus founding Victoria.

His small settlement remained in much its original state until 1849, when the whole island was granted to the Company, under condition that in five years they would have prepared it by settlement for colonization. Such is an outline of the history of Vancouver's. The productions consist of coal, timber and furs; and every sort of grain that has yet been tried, appears to flourish with luxuriance, the heavy night dews keeping it fresh, even when no rain falls for weeks and sometimes months.

The climate is one of the most delightful you can imagine, no extremes, rather resembling weather in the south of England, but with a much shorter winter; November and December being the only months you can term stormy, though in January there are slight frosts. Vegetation begins in

February, and during March and April is encouraged by regular showers.

After this comes the dry month, though everything depends upon the dews. During the months of June, July, and August (the height of summer), the thermometer rises sometimes as high as 92° , but that only happens occasionally, the mean temperature being from 60° to 80° . The autumn months are troubled by dense fogs, and to this cause may be attributed the occasional failure of the crops, the heat not being sufficient to overcome the excessive damp.

In such a climate as this, when even the hottest day in summer is refreshed by cool breezes passing over the snowy range of Olympus, one can well imagine there is small occasion for doctors, and it is affirmed no one dies except of old age, or by an accident.

Even since the influx of diggers and the consequent increase of vice, sickness and death are so rare that a case of either causes quite a commotion, and the doctors are all by

the ears, there is a regular race who is to be in at the death.

The origin of the island from volcanic birth cannot be doubted by ~~any~~ one who has made a journey inland, and examined the surface of the rocks.

The centre of the island is mountainous, but has been only partially explored, and most of our information rests upon reports of Indians, who it is well known are ~~the~~ the greatest liars unhung. A company has been formed to do their best in finding out the capabilities of the island, and to their report, when it shall be brought before the public, we simple log writers must bow.

The soil of Vancouver's consists of three kinds, a rich vegetable deposit of a dark colour-ed soil, next a clay-loam, and thirdly sand ; but in speaking of the capabilities of such a country I do not think I can do better than quote an authenticated letter from a practical man, and one which will, I doubt not, make more impression than a sailor's opinion. Believing

such to be the case I shall give the letter verbatim.

"We arrived here on the 4th of August, and found everything better than we expected. I got work the day after I arrived; I went about the town looking at the men working, and enquired of them how long they had been in business, and found that most of them had only been at work here from three to six weeks; I then came to the conclusion that I would make one of their number, and take work for myself.

I accordingly got a small set of tools, rented a house, got a stove with all cooking utensils, got a bed; made a table, and benches, and took the berth of a first steward, and bottle-washer. I next went to work by the day and fitted up a store at a place where my son is stopping; I got four dollars a day. I then took a carpenter from London in with me. We took a small job at sixty-seven dollars, and finished it in nine and a half days; we

then took a house to build for a minister for two hundred dollars. We have been at it five days, and it will take about two weeks yet to finish it.

“ Last Thursday, Mr. Clarke, from Owen Sound, and myself took a job from the Hudson’s Bay Company. Mr. Clarke has been getting timber out for them all summer, at four dollars a day ; he recommended me to them, as one who could do what work they wished to have done. It is to put in the timber and posts, frame a roof and make it ready, lay the floors and put in the windows ; the windows with their frames are sent out from England all ready to put in. I take out the sash, number them, and afterwards put them in ; the flooring is all machine dressed, and ready to lay. There are four doors to make ; the place is at the harbour, and is a warehouse. We are to get nineteen hundred and fifty dollars for it ; the work could be done in Owen Sound for six hundred dollars.

“ I am offered the work of two light-houses,

as soon as we get this done ; it will take me about four months. I believe I am one of the exceptions, there are plenty running idle, and I have offered many Canadians a job, but they will not work unless they get four dollars a day, and have not a tool in the world to work with, and will remain idle sooner than go to work for less wages.

“ Two men arrived yesterday from Toronto ; they have travelled through from the head of Lake Superior to this place. The country through which they came, is, they say, as fine as they have ever seen, fine open land with large prairies and fine soil. The country is open enough to travel with horses to the Rocky Mountains ; these they can descend very easily.

“ The men looked pretty well used up, but I got a job for them, and cheered them a little.

“ Our town is about as large as Owen Sound, but is built more compactly. There are about one hundred and fifty stores and

groceries, one hundred taverns and restaurants, and doctors and lawyers by the dozen.

“I am ashamed of Canada. The streets are thronged with young Canadians, who come out here with a fine suit of clothes on, with some great recommendation, and are all trying to get some easy berth, and put some poor fellow out of office. These poor fellows here, perhaps, have remonstrated a little with their tyrant masters, and get kicked out now, while others crawl in that are too lazy to work. There is no use any man coming here, unless he is willing and able to work ; he must take hold for himself, and not stand about complaining.

“There is one drawback here, and that is the Government. Our Governor is a tool for a party opposed to the settlement of the colony. In the next place, the Americans are reaping a great harvest ; everything comes through their hands well-sifted. You over in Canada sit contending about straws, and

the Americans are running away with the commercial interests of all British America. Let the Canadian Government set to work, and make some sort of road to connect their present water communication direct to the Fraser River, and more than twenty thousand would annually travel there in preference to risking the dangers of going round the Isthmus of Panama, and suffering the imposition of foreigners. If a direct communication from Toronto to the Fraser River were made, it would do Canada more good than all the stock-jobbing humbug of the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.

“There is no difficult undertaking; the roads to be made between one water-communication and another are level and easy made, and most of the way a good level country. There is also one drawback here among the miners; they have no roads to get their provisions up, without costing them their profits.

“Every miner can make from three to five dollars a day, at almost any place on the

Fraser, but the bad living disheartens them ; and when they hear that the wages at other places are better, they leave them, and roam from place to place until their little means are gone. Then they curse the country, and go away dissatisfied. But let them come here, with their minds made up that everything is not smooth, and they will not be disappointed.

“ I believe that the climate here is good, though different from Canada. It commences to rain about January, and rains good and strong until March. The farmers then commence their spring work. Everything gets a good start before dry weather sets in, and eventually comes to perfection. The dry weather begins about the middle of June, and lasts to September, with the exception of two or three showers. The wheat here is better than in California ; the head is larger, the grain more plump. It stands out from the stalk like small peas. One day, I pulled several heads in the Governor’s field, and

found they averaged from sixty-five to seventy-three to the head. The wheat weighs from sixty-five to sixty-seven pounds to the bushel. Barley is equally good. The same with oats and potatoes; these cannot be beat anywhere.

Corn is good. Apples, plums, pears, peaches, and cherries do well here. Apples will bear in four years, plums in three. Vegetables grow all winter, such as beets, carrots, and turnips. Cabbages are poor, owing to the dry weather, but many are setting out their winter cabbages now. They keep growing all winter, and many of the flowers are now (September) budding out. Cattle and sheep feed out all winter.

“The grain stands out more than two months ripe on the stalks, or in stacks; many are busy taking in their grain. We had a smart shower here on the 20th of September; this is the first worth mentioning since we came here. The farmers talk of beginning ploughing next month. They plough and

sow wheat all through October and November. Any farmer who could come here, then have his wife and children at a future day, if he had just enough to start, and is industrious, will do, and could make two thousand dollars per annum.

“ Horses are worth from two hundred to three hundred dollars ; oxen, one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars ; cows, from fifty to seventy dollars ; sheep, from eight to fifteen dollars ; hogs, not so dear. Butter is now worth from fifty to seventy-five cents a pound, cheese the same, milk, fifty cents a gallon, lard eleven cents, mutton and beef, twenty-five cents. The air here is so pure that beef and mutton can hang in the butchers’ stalls for MONTHS ! and not spoil, or get fly-blown. The same with fish.

“ The Indians cut open the fish, and hang them up in the sun, and they will get dry and not smell the least tainted. They put no salt on them. We buy them, and soak them over-night, and fry them, and you cannot tell them

from fresh fish ; but if you cover them down, they will spoil directly. Fishing companies would pay well ; there are none here. Governor Douglass has sent away all the Queen Charlotte Island Indians, and the others are too lazy to work ; so nothing is done.

“The two tribes were always at war, fighting and killing each other, and for that reason the strangers were sent away.

“They had a fight here one Sunday, and seven of the Queen Charlotte Indians were killed. It is great fun to see them fight. When they had their last fight, the whites went to look on, and the Indians came running, and wanted them to keep back for fear the balls would hit them. They killed one of the squaws, and flung her in the bay, and she has been floating about there for more than a month. I went and talked to the Indians about it, and some of them went with me, and wanted to see if she was any relation, meaning their tribe, as I learned by a Frenchman ; but she was not their relation, so they

went away, and she is floating there yet, as far as I know.

“The white men kick the Indians about like dogs, and the more they kick them the better they are liked.

“Our election comes off next week ; there is a darkey coming out to run. I hope he will ; it will cut some of the big men here, as he is sure to run in. There are many coloured men, and all wealthy, and have votes. The Americans will throw in their weight to the darkey, and I believe he will get in.”

The letter winds up by some family affairs, among which is the statement that the child, which was always sickly in Owen Sound, is now as blooming as a rose, and has not had a day’s ill health since his arrival.

CHAPTER V.

“And man tho’ he beareth the brand of sin,
And the flesh and the devil have bound him,
Hath a spirit within to old Eden akin,
Only nurture up Eden around him.”

GERALD MASSEY.

THE centre of the Island of Vancouver is very mountainous, and, apparently, impracticable for general cultivation. But there has *been very little examination* into its advantages, beyond the outside range of mountains, and, from what I heard, it appears to me that the settlers, in reality, know about as much of what sort of country lies beyond that boundary as the inhabitants of the Cape know

about the interior of Africa. All the interest that is taken is in cutting wood, and the hills produce magnificent timber, and a great quantity is exported to California, and even, lately, to Europe, as masts and spars for ship-building. The best grown wood has, as yet, been found in the vicinity of Fort Rupert.

The soil of the island is of three descriptions; the first, a rich vegetable deposit; the second, clay-loam; and the third, sand. These distinctions are easily humoured by a good practical farmer, and, with proper management and a very moderate outlay, the soil yields excellent crops of wheat, barley, oats, peas, beans, turnips, potatoes, &c. All kinds of green cropping flourish magnificently, and clover ~~shows~~ wild in most parts, often to a great height, and producing two and three full crops of hay in the year. All our English garden roots assume a better form out here, and I never saw such celery and seakale as was common on every table.

The importance of the colony has been much enhanced by the discovery of coal, and a new impetus has been given to trade by the advent of numerous coasting vessels. A great quantity of the coal is transported to San Francisco, where it sells well, and amply repays the working, freightage, &c., bringing twenty-eight dollars per ton.

The capital of the Island is Victoria, founded by the Hudson's Bay Company, and is situated on a small harbour of its own, within six miles of Esquimalt, one of the best harbours in the world. Public conveyances run regularly to and fro between the landing place and town.

There is a plain of seven square miles round the town, and about three hundred and fifty acres of open land, with a great extent of scrubby woodland, very easily cleared and made available for cultivation, particularly by adopting the Indian method of burning.

As soon as the frosts, setting in up in the interior of Columbia, force the niggers to give up their work, they begin to congregate at Victoria, bringing with them their riches, which they are so anxious to get rid of, that, finding they cannot do so quickly enough here, they go off to California and spend them in San Francisco.

The last work I read upon Californian gaming houses, was one called the "Old and New World," and it contained an admirable description of both San Francisco and Australia, with very particular descriptions of the sort of places in which miners like to spend their money ; and as I do not pretend, in this account of mine, to say anything exciting, or mention a subject of which our sisters might not read, I shall leave more enterprising readers to search out authors who enter into such particulars, and to make their own conclusions.

At the date at which I send this account to the press, there has been such a rapid pro-

gress in the moral government and conduct of the emigrants, that the Judge states "that, in 1859, there was not one murder, not one attempted murder, not one duel, and but one assault with a deadly weapon in the British territory."

Certainly, the result is wonderful, and more so when we are aware that the police force never exceeds twenty men, that every digger is armed, and that these men are such as have been considered, heretofore, the most lawless reprobates in the world.

The greatest drawback, at the present time, is not the moral government, but the want of inducement held out to men with empty or slender purses, and strong hearts, to go out and take up the waste land, at a lower rate than that which Government now demands for it.

From all my own experience shewed me of the land itself, the general features of the country, and, also, the publicly expressed opinion of men who have lived for years in the

colony, and watched over its gradual development, I am convinced that there could not be found a more eligible and more desirable spot for emigration.

There is now no doubt that the gold field is of a higher character than that of California, infinitely more easily worked, and although there are a couple or so of months in which working is prevented by frost, snow, and winter-floods, still, in spite of this, more gold is realized, and what is technically called a "pile" is, usually, of better quality.

Some of the successful diggers establish themselves in small stores, or buy land; many more, however, go away. These last are usually men who have been "digging" before in California, and, finding they cannot spend their gains as quickly as they have been accustomed to do, they go back to San Francisco, and come again in spring without a penny in the world.

Of course, a great deal of the gold

remains in circulation in Victoria, and a marked and rapid improvement is the result; while confidence in the colony and its progress is daily becoming more apparent, and men who have been laying by money to return home with, are now beginning to invest it in land, and settling down permanently in the colony, confident in the security of their adopted land.

The reports of gold being found in the interior of Vancouver's Island have set a new spirit of enterprise afloat, and an expedition will visit the portions as yet unknown, and report as to their capabilities. Thus we shall soon have a scientific account of what lies open to us in that part.

Since the opening of the Panama railway, the journey to Vancouver's and the coast has been immensely facilitated in point of time, and, where time is money, of course, in expense. So great was the rush at first, that, during the first four years of its working, one hundred and twenty-one thousand eight

hundred and twenty passengers, thirty-four millions worth of gold, and nearly six millions worth of silver were carried across. All the silver for England; and although a portion of the gold went to New York, it would almost all, eventually, find its way to England.

The length of passage from England to Vancouver's varied from five to six months round the Horn. Now, by Panama, the average passage is forty days; while, from New York, it is reduced to twenty-three days, and steamers ply regularly between New York, New Orleans, Southampton, London, Liverpool, &c., &c., being met on the Pacific side by steamers from California, and those towns of wealth enough to furnish a vessel plying along the Mexican, Chilian, and Peruvian coasts.

When, however, the central route, direct across our territory from Canada, is established, which, I have no doubt, it soon will be, we shall think of a trip to see our

relations at the other side of the world much in the light we talk of going to Italy now.

The Indian population of Vancouver's has been roughly estimated at seventeen thousand. These are subdivided into tribes, the most powerful of which inhabit the west coast. These are Clayoquets, and though avoiding close contact with Europeans, they are staunch and faithful allies. On the north and east coasts, the Camex and Yakletah tribes are our inveterate enemies, vying in hostility with the Nootkas.

One would naturally suppose tribes continually at war with each other must be brave. But this is not the case ; the tribes are cowardly and deceitful in their wars, and only guilty of cruelty and dogged courage when driven to it.

Since the colonization of the Island, wars have become less frequent, and as the Indians amalgamate with the settlers, all such distinction of tribe will be forgotten.

The progress of religion, too, under such guidance as that of the good Bishop now wisely chosen and sent in authority, will do much to improve the natives. At present, the body of the natives have no religion, and are, singularly without an idea of divine power.

Slavery, in its worst form, is common among the Indians, and the poor slave, taken in war, or caught straying from his own tribe, becomes, solely and entirely, the property of his master, who has the right to kill, mutilate, or punish him in any way his passions direct. Some of them own a number of slaves, and with such it was no uncommon boast that they could sacrifice five or six to their gods.

The natives are, by no means, a handsome race, and bear a strong resemblance to the North American Indians, having the same high cheek-bones, long nose, wide mouth, and low, flat forehead. Their manner of living and food brings on the appearances of old

age prematurely, and some of them look absolutely hideous, their scanty clothing exposing every limb. Indeed, I could not endure seeing some of the old women, and often, in my rides, shut my eyes in desperation.

Another thing which adds to their ugliness, is the custom which prevails of flattening their heads, from which they derive the general appellation of “Flat-heads.” The operation begins almost directly a child is born. A prepared board is ready, and upon this the little creature is laid, its head being bound across by two leather bands, which are passed back and forward through slits in the upper part of the frame. This bandage is very seldom removed, and then but for a second or two, until eighteen months or two years have elapsed, when the head has received a sufficient direction to make it grow in the proper form.

I think the pressure produces a stupor, as no sign of pain is evinced, except upon the

temporary removal of the band, when the little sufferer's cries are so piteous that the mother is glad to replace the strap.

Strange as it may seem, this extraordinary self-wrought deformity does not at all affect the intellect, and far from these people being the semi-idiots I really expected, I was soon brought to a different conclusion by being cleverly cheated by one of the flattest-headed gentlemen I had met with; and upon mentioning my surprise to some settlers, I found the natives are considered particularly sharp and long-headed in more ways than one. Moreover, that they live clear-headed to a great age.

Each tribe forms a separate village, which they enclose by a fence or palisade of young fir trees, cut into stakes, and placed side by side, having twigs or thin branches interlaced through and through. The huts themselves are from twenty to thirty feet square, built of whole trees, with a larger one at the entrance, in the bowl of which a hole, large enough to

act as a doorway, is cut ; at the top of this an image is carved, generally that of a man. In some villages the houses differ. The one I am describing was the first I saw, and by far the most picturesque.

Gambling and racing are their chief amusements, and I had many opportunities of seeing both.

They ride well, and will stake their last possession upon the success of a favourite horse. Unfortunately, gambling has grown to such a passion that, when the player has lost his all, he generally finishes his cares by committing suicide. This last appears an infallible resource in any difficulty, and, a few days after our arrival, was brought prominently before us by one of the men finding the dead bodies of two native women, both in a small thick wood.

It appeared they were the wives of a great chief, and being jealous of each other, hit upon this way of settling the question, strangely

enough choosing the same day and wood to do it in.

Happening to meet the bereaved widower a short time subsequent, I began condoling with him upon his loss, when the old reprobate grinned, and holding up five fingers, intimated he had already supplied the loss, and with interest.

Their marriage laws are, simply, that when a man sees a girl who pleases him, he goes to her parents, and says how much he can give for her. If enough, she is taken to his hut. Any number of wives is permitted, and it is looked upon as a sign of wealth to possess several. All the hard work falls to their share, but, in turn, they manage to leave it to the slaves, and lead a pretty easy life.

Their food consists of fish, deer's flesh, and cama roots, the last being to them what the potato is to Ireland, and bearing a close resemblance to it in substance, though also partaking slightly of the taste and appearance of an

onion. The name of Esquimault is derived from this root, and signifies a "place for gathering camas."

Of the wild animals on the Island, bears are the most numerous. Panthers are disappearing, yet they are frequently met with; and just before our arrival one had been shot near Victoria by a little boy. He, with his brother, got a gun, and went out without any one knowing; by chance a panther came upon them, and he shot it dead—I daresay much to his own astonishment. I had several adventures with them; but I shall speak of my hunting in the next chapter.

There were, and still are, in some parts, large herds of deer, the elk being the best for food, and at the same time most difficult to get at. The wolves are fast vanishing, as is always the case where civilization advances, and, except in winter, you seldom hear of them doing any mischief. Dogs are numberless, both in private and wild life, one pecu-

liarly long-haired kind being bred for the sake of their fur, which is interwoven with frayed bark for blankets.

Of birds there are several; the finest I came across was something like a black-cock, but with a long peculiar cry more resembling a screech-owl. Partridges stay near the cultivated ground, and afford capital sport. I have read of snipe, and certainly saw one, but everybody talked of him as a little wonder.

Fishing is the principal occupation of the natives, and no wonder, for the whole coast teems with cod, salmon, sturgeon, &c. Herrings come in shoals, and their spawn is considered a national delicacy. The native method of gathering it deserves record. Finding that the fish seek out sunny water, and prefer anything bright to spawn upon, they fasten green boughs along the bed of the stream, and as soon as a shoal of spawning herrings has passed over, the boughs are lifted up, the spawn, with which they are thickly covered,

is wiped off into a reservoir, and then run dry, when it is rolled into balls, and laid aside for festive occasions.

Sometimes a whale is blown ashore, and in this, too, the ingenuity of the natives displays itself. They actually float the whale, managing it in this wise. To a barbed spear-head they first attach a long rope, generally sea-weed, then a bladder of seal-skin filled with air, lastly, a stalk, which is quite loose, and easily withdrawn. As soon as the whale is seen, they assemble all their force and set off, and having stuck him all over with these bladders, they wait for the rising tide, and then, by the help of it and their united efforts, haul the monstrosity over the bar, he being able to do little in self-defence, owing to the impossibility of his getting down into any depth of water.

A whale is a great prize, particularly as the blubber forms one of their favourite articles of food, and has a place at every feast.

I have now told enough of the general sea-

tures of the island to make my personal acquaintance with its separate aspects more intelligible, and if I find it necessary, I shall, with all the more pleasure, return to the subject, feeling that I have tried not to weary my reader with dry detail.

CHAPTER VI.

“ Powder, wadding, dog and gun,
I never shall forget the fun
We had when going a shooting.”

MY first day's sporting in Vancouver's is impressed very forcibly on my mind, more, however, from the predominance of disagreeable and disappointing casualties than anything of a particularly delightful nature. Two friends of mine, both capital fellows, and, by their own account, first-rate shots, accompanied me; and on this memorable occasion we started at daybreak, fully equipped.

The dog that accompanied us was fated to be a very Snarley-yow, a regular fiend of the genus canine. We had purchased him in Victoria with a splendid character, and being a personable animal in outward show, we had some ground to expect better things of him ; thinking, too, that though he might have faults, he would still be a dog, and help us a little.

We had a lovely morning walk, through a country reminding me strongly of Devonshire, excepting only, of course, the new and strange foliage, and the warm, clear feeling in the air, which came laden with perfume over the ripe corn-fields. Now and then we met a party of reapers, many of them laughing and joking in the full rich brogue of Old Ireland, while others were plainly from beyond the Tweed, and every line in their freckled faces, and tone in their slow, deliberate voices, spoke of the Lowlands of Old Scotland. Each party gave us “good” morning, some adding a word for “luck,” and some touching their caps.

Encounters such as this made us almost

fancy ourselves in England, nor was the delusion lessened by being hailed by a stout old gentleman, standing at the door of a thorough English rick-yard, and who, after claiming us as countrymen, gave us an invitation to go in to breakfast at his house, which we had just admired in passing.

Of course we accepted, stipulating only to be allowed to move on directly after, as our leave was for the day only ; a request he agreed to, if his daughters would let us.

He promised to show us a covey in a field close at hand. The word sounded so English and homelike, that I, for one, felt inclined to *shake hands over again with the old gentleman* ; but as he had his buried in his pockets, I only grinned and looked amiable, following our new friend through a pretty garden, filled with familiar flowers, evidently tended with great care, and sending forth their richest perfume on the morning air.

The house itself struck me as the perfection of a place. It was all on one storey, with a

broad verandah all round, up which roses and honeysuckles clustered, all glittering with dew, and into which, immediately before us, opened two large French windows—displaying, at one, a group of girls, at the other, a breakfast table, glittering with bright plate and china, the dear old-fashioned silver urn steaming and spluttering in the middle.

I was at home in a moment ; and nobody could have looked at the three fair sisters, whose kind smiles and bright eyes now gave us a welcome, without loving them ; and most gratefully did we accept their breakfast, and tell them all the news we knew, which, heaven knows, was little enough, and which, I believe, was really stale to them, as I noticed a quick glance and suppressed smile now and then.

After breakfast, our host kept his word, and after giving us an open invitation to return whenever we could, hurried us off to the turnip field in which lay the covey. Our dog, whom we had, *pro tem.*, christened Ponto,

being the nearest approach to the cognomen given us by his late owner, followed close at our heels, looking exceedingly frightened, nor could our most earnest persuasions induce him to range the turnips.

“Never mind,” said our friend, “I always range for myself; pointers are scarce in the colony.”

Taking his advice, we scattered, and presently flushed a covey of fourteen birds, three of which fell, and subsequently, on following the covey, two more; when, finding they were the only ones he was sure of on his land, we left the remainder, and saying farewell, continued our journey.

The scenery now underwent a great change. The road suddenly stopped and became a mere track through scrubby underwood, with, here and there, a large pine towering high above its humbler brethren. As the ground rose, this underwood gave place to larger trees, and by the time we had got about half a mile up the base, we were surrounded by a splen-

did forest, enormous trunks marshalled all around, often bare of branches for thirty feet. Here and there a gleam of sunshine penetrated through the rich canopy above, formed by the interlaced branches ; but this small ray made the sombre darkness only more visible. Now and then it would brighten a spot of black moss, changing it as if by magic into a glittering emerald, now circling round a rough old trunk, then fluttering coquettishly about a tender young sapling. Squirrels were the only living thing visible, and hopped about in all directions, scarcely caring to move out of our way.

The effect was enchanting ; the most unromantic mind in the world must have owned the influence. As for us, although by no means given to anything of the kind, we walked on in charmed silence, only finding our tongues when we reached an open swamp, and saw we might look out for game.

Following the farmer's advice, we divided,

each making a semi-circle, and at the given signal stretching into the swamp.

After some discussion the dog was left to my charge, no one appearing to place much dependence upon his abilities after the example we had already witnessed in the turnip field. When my companions left me, I sat down upon a fallen tree to await the promised signal, with Ponto at my feet. Suddenly a terrible cry rang through the forest ; I sprang up, thinking it was the voice of one of my friends, and fearful some dreadful calamity had occurred ; but I listened in vain, all was silent, and still as death—then hark ! again thrilled the fearful yell, and my heart seemed to stand still. There could be no doubt it was a human shriek, such a one as is only wrung forth by mortal agony ; cold drops stood upon my forehead as I debated what I ought to do, and strange as it was, I could not make up my mind from which direction the sound came. And as both my friends had gone in opposite directions, I thought if I ran

one way on chance of its being the right one, I would naturally enough 'miss what might be the scene of danger; so there seemed nothing but to wait, prepared to act upon the next alarm. I was still standing with every nerve on the stretch, when a sudden crashing through the bushes made me whirl round—it was Harry Maitland, pale as a ghost, his jacket hanging round him in rags, and his uncovered hair flying in the wind.

“Good God, Fitz, what is it?—are you safe?” he gasped, holding his hand pressed to his side.

“Yes, yes, it must be Peter,” I exclaimed, and not daring to put off an instant, I went off as fast as I could in the way the third of our party, commonly called Peter, had taken. I had not gone a hundred yards when the shriek sounded again, this time close beside me, and strangely enough the mystery was solved. Ponto made a dash into the thickest part of the bush, and up rose a large bird, uttering, in rapid and unmistakable rota-

tion, the sounds which had caused so much alarm.

Very much relieved, and yet slightly vexed at being so easily deceived, I put up my gun and knocked over the cause of our alarm. We subsequently found the bird to be one named the Tetrao Obscurus, and somewhat resembling the common grouse, though larger and of a palish blue plumage with a yellow throat, round which hangs a loose skin, which it seems is the means whereby he utters his discordant note. Many people call this bird the grouse of Vancouver's, and certainly when well kept and dressed as such, he resembles it in flavour, and would make a good substitute.

When Harry recovered his breath, we turned back together, heartily laughing at our fright, and both with a strong idea of having made rather an absurd exhibition of ourselves.

On regaining my post, I seated myself, and Harry proceeded to his destination. I sat for

about a quarter of an hour, and then heard Peter's well-known whistle, signifying that he at least was ready to enter the swamp. Oh ! how much that cheery whistle would have relieved my mind a few minutes ago ! Now, so changed was I that I felt rather provoked, and I believe my feelings were shared by Harry, as he let the whistle be repeated twice or thrice before he vouchsafed an answer, and then it was in a sulky defiant tone I understood the meaning of.

Having whistled my recognition of the double signal, I plunged into the swamp, by no means an easy place to travel in, particularly as the long, rank grass grew high over my head, and presented an almost impassable barrier in its thick hard stems. On I went, however, crashing, perspiring and eager to get a glimpse of anything living, with all the time a painful sensation that, if my friends got at all excited, they might possibly enough forget my proximity and send a stray shot or two into my unfortunate carcass. All this

was certainly a little trying to a fellow's temper, particularly when large thistles and wondrous thorns are piercing you on every side, and the cactus is warning you to look out for unknown enemies. It was dreadfully hot, too, not a breath of air finding its way into this island of the forest, while the rays of the midday sun beat down upon us without any mercy, awakening into life and activity myriads of little black flies that sting most unmercifully, and buzz about your head, eyes, and face in a terribly annoying way. On I toiled, making very little progress, though with inconceivable exertion. A partridge sprang up and fell to my gun, but what use was it looking for him? I tried, it is true, but soon saw it was only waste of time, and finding the grass getting finer and more easy to push through, I hurried forward, gaining an open part where the long weeds gave place to native clover, studded with raspberry and currant bushes—the first laden with fine fruit of a delightful flavour. Of course I helped

myself, and ate as many as I felt inclined, happy enough to find anything so delicious, and which in my present state of heat appeared perfect nectar. I had forgotten everything except the tempting bunches hanging over my head, and was in the act of reaching up for another, when I was recalled to my senses by a couple of loud shouts, followed closely by the bang of four barrels in rapid succession.

“By Jove, they’re getting sport,” I exclaimed as I darted off in the direction whence came the sounds of combat ; and was hurrying on at my best, when a great brown bear met me full in the face, knocked me completely over, and left me lying with ten thousand stars dancing before my eyes, and an unpleasant apprehension that the gentleman might be waiting to see if I was done for before giving me a second salutation. This fear was dispelled by the timely appearance of my friends, flushed and eager with excitement, and both rifles ready in their hands.

Seeing me, they came to a dead stop, but I soon relieved their fear by jumping up and shouting I was all right, though a bear had knocked me over.

“Yes, yes,” they exclaimed, “but where is he?”

“All right, my boys, follow me;” and picking up my rifle, nothing loath to have revenge for my overthrow, I started off in pursuit.

We came upon Master Bruin just at the edge of the thickest part of the swamp, where the reeds were thick and strong; here he turned at bay, and I must own looked as formidable a customer as one would wish to see. Ponto now shewed himself a good ally, and came gallantly to our assistance, occupying the bear’s attention while we gave him a broadside.

Every bullet told; up he got on his hind legs, made a beautiful attempt to walk towards us, but, receiving a couple of balls in his chest, rolled over and lay kicking and groaning, evidently giving up the ghost. We kept at a respectful distance, quite content with

our exploit, while Peter executed a sort of impromptu war dance (quite oblivious that he had been appointed lieutenant the day before).

After taking an incredibly long time to die, the bear's struggles ceased, and we saw he was breathless. Then we ventured to draw near, measure, examine, and rejoice over our prize, rather an unexpected one for fellows going out partridge-shooting.

Our next business was to get him down to Victoria, or at all events into safe custody for the night.

First of all we collected all the twine, or anything in the shape of it we could muster, and then gathering branches, constructed a rough sort of raft or sledge. Then we had to get the carcass dragged through the intervening ground and grass to the edge of the forest, where the raft lay, a by no means easy operation, and which occupied us fully an hour with good hard work, and no resting. First we had to trample down a road ; then, that done, drag the carcass over it. Our per-

severance won the day, and we had our reward in seeing him stretched safe, and skin whole, upon our primitive raft.

As long as we were in the forest we got on swimmingly, but on reaching the rougher and opener ground our task became an impossibility. The raft stuck fast, upset, ran over us, or, indeed, any way but the right way ; and at last seeing it was utterly impracticable, we gave it up, and leaving Peter in charge, Maitland and I set off to bring help.

This we found at a little rough cottage, inhabited by an English sailor and his native wife ; they listened to us with great eagerness, and immediately brought out an old horse to carry the bear down.

There seemed no hut of any kind near this, and yet before we got half way back to our bear, we were joined by a dozen natives, all anxious to see him, and counting us perfect heroes.

We, though nothing loath for a moderate share of praise, had some difficulty to bear our

laurels with proper humility. Ponto appeared to enjoy it even more than we did, trotting alongside, and carrying his tail in the most absurdly triumphant manner.

Our *entrée* on board was unexceptionable ; great and general was the rush of eager enquirers, and the conquest of bears became the one subject of conversation of young and old.

The next day he was skinned and decapitated ; one ham was presented to our Captain, and the other graced a feast given especially in his honour, being pronounced by all “most excellent.”

The rumour as to our intended departure was gradually assuming more form, so, finding I had best take time by the forelock, I proposed to four friends to get leave for twelve days, and by clubbing our resources together, engage a good boat and competent crew, and start on our expedition.

Having ascertained all we could relative to our route, and ~~the~~ best manner of behaving to the tribes we were likely to meet, we set

sail up the Gulf of Georgia, intending, if possible, to get round the island. Of course, a doubtful achievement, and dependent entirely upon wind and tide, besides our success or temptations in the sporting line.

Everything promised well ; we got a first rate crew, and a wonderful Yankee hunter, settler or adventurer, whichever you like to call him, as our guide. The first day's run up to the Cowitchen river was splendid--wind, tide, everything in our favour ; we only looked in at the mouth of the river, and took our first rest just off the new coal district, appropriately named Newcastle Island. :

Naniamo harbour is very secure, has a good anchorage in every part, and is pretty well sheltered. There is a prodigious tidal rise, usually twelve feet, sometimes as much as fifteen. When we entered, the harbour was full of small coaling vessels from San Francisco, Panama, &c.

We could not at that time in the evening distinguish much of the country, so contented

ourselves with making the most of our chance and seeing the town itself, which is well worth the visit, being a flourishing, well regulated little place with some three hundred inhabitants, a good school, and clean, comfortable houses.

Here we heard great accounts of the deer to be found in the neighbourhood, and were tempted to go off upon a couple of days' hunting up the country—the boat coasting up to meet us at Valdez Inlet. Next morning our Yankee guide was on the *qui vive* at day-break, kicking up a frightful noise, and just as the sun's first kiss crimsoned the grey skies, we started upon our expedition.

For some distance the country was flat, sandy, and without much inducement for the agriculturist ; but after going on a while, we got into a rich, well covered prairie, prettily undulating, and with all the appearance of making good land. Here we saw and bagged a good many partridges, also a few native grouse, and our bags were pretty full before

the shrubs and trees began to warn of the mountain range. Very soon we were fairly in for it, climbing up precipitous grey rocks, pushing through forests, and occasionally jumping a deep gully or fissure, the remnant of the fierce commotions that had occurred at the island's birth.

The centre of the island is, as I before said, one mountainous mass, the sharp pinnacles towering one behind another in wild confusion. You go on ascending and descending, it is all one, waves of mountains rise all round you, some clad in rich green foliage, others bare as when they first sprang from their ocean bed; in some places you unexpectedly stumble upon a little luxuriant plain or valley perfectly painted with flowers, alive with squirrels and woodpeckers, a complete oasis in this strange unknown wilderness.

After travelling for about four hours, we reached an Indian village, where our guide informed us we were sure to hear whether there was a herd of deer near or not, as these

Indians deal regularly with Naniamo, often bringing as many as sixteen head down at a time.

The village was a collection of log huts, different in some measure from those I saw near Victoria. They hollow out a part of the ground to the depth of three or four feet; round this, upon the surface of the ground, they pile cedar logs, well fastened together with bark ropes and sea-weed; the roof is formed of planks, supported by a whole tree crossing the hut as a beam, these planks being so firmly packed together that they effectually resist the rain. The entrance is low and narrow, and the door itself a cedar log.

The interior of the huts is close and warm; they are usually large enough to contain two, three, or even four families, who creep in and pack themselves in the most amicable manner for their winter rest; and so averse are they to moving that, unless obliged, they will not go out for weeks together. When I tried to sit in one comparatively airy

and empty, I was obliged to rush out, the smell was so intolerable. What, then, must be the state of the atmosphere in mid-winter, particularly as the roofs are completely strung with lines and cross-lines of dried fish, principally salmon, which, with camas, forms their winter stock of provisions.

The salmon are very nice when well dried and properly preserved ; but the Indians prefer them nearly putrid, and actually bury them before eating.

As it was still warm weather, very few of the natives had donned their winter garments, consisting of a blanket manufactured by themselves from various things : one, the most costly, of a native flax ; another of bark and dog's hair ; a third of goose-skin ; and the last, and most common, of fibre taken from the soft inner bark of the fir-tree.

When the goose-skin mats are clean and new, they are very pretty, but, unfortunately, they fill with vermin, and it is no uncommon thing with the natives, when at a loss for con-

versation, to begin hunting either their friends', or their own cloaks, frequently conveying them to their mouths.

In summer, the natives dispense with the blankets, the women wearing a short petticoat of cedar bark, the men seldom anything, or, at most, a bark tail in front, reaching from the waist to the knees. Tattooing is in great repute, and a mark of distinction. They do not wear many ornaments, and such as they have are almost entirely of native manufacture, made of shells, teeth, and wood.

Immediately on our arrival, we were invited to the chief's residence, where we found the great man seated in due state upon the usual heap of mats, and surrounded by his warriors and wives. After our presentation in due form, we seated ourselves according to their ideas of respect. Then we smoked awhile, and tried to partake of a calabash of pounded camas, which was carried to each, and duly tasted. Next came a dish of half-cooked meat, but what I could not make out. This portion of

the ceremony over, we were commanded to tell the reason why we had come so far, and what we were going to do.

Having cleared up this mystery, our host became very energetic, and speaking in pretty good English, promised to shew us deer if we would stay in his village the next day, that being already fixed as a great feast, in honour of the final ceremony in the election of a doctor or medicine-man.

Of course we consented, and our doing so gave general satisfaction. An impromptu merry-making was organized for that night, and we had thus an opportunity of seeing a good deal of their habits and characters. Their dances are like those of almost all uncivilized nations, merely absurd positions diversified by hideous shrieks and howls.

Then followed games of various kinds; one very much resembling nine pins was the favourite, and was kept up all night, the players betting wildly on the chances of each stroke, and seeming to forget everything else in their

excitement. Long after we had retired into the hut given up for our use, my dreams were broken by wild yells of disappointment uttered by the gamblers ; and when the sun again shone, some of them were still playing.

CHAPTER VII.

“Clad in all their richest raiment,
Robes of fur and belts of wampum,
Splendid with their paint and plumage,
Beautiful with beads and tassels.”

MIAWATHA.

THERE had evidently been a great gathering from other villages during the night, as the enclosure or palisade was now entirely filled, all dressed and painted in their holiday fashion ; the women redolent with salmon oil, their long black hair actually dripping with it. Large fires were already lighted, round which clustered slaves laden with calabashes and bundles of provisions, while heads of well decayed salmon lay temptingly arranged,

emitting an intensely disgusting effluvium, as the heat of the increasing fires reached them.

The principal attraction appeared to be a solitary hut, round which the crowd gathered at a certain distance. This, we were soon informed, was the place in which the medicine-man lay asleep, and in which he had been shut up without food, water, or lights for three days.

Presently, the chief appeared, leading a body of the oldest medicine-men ; the crowd gave way on either side, and not a sound was heard as they approached the mysterious hut. For a few seconds he stood at the entrance, then signing to the doctors, they pulled out the log in the door-way, and rushed in.

There was a thrill of excitement, every one breathing hard and pressing forward ; then horrible yells were heard inside, and two of the medicine-men came out, tearing their hair, and cutting themselves with shells ; next came two more, bearing what I thought a dead body.

The moment this was seen, a demoniacal yell burst from every throat, and numbers of the people began imitating the gestures of the medicine-men, tearing wildly at their flesh until the blood gushed in streams.

Meantime, the body was carried to a pool of water, and laid down ; it was then rubbed and beat in a most unmerciful manner. Suddenly, the man I had imagined dead sprang up. He had been acting part of the ceremony, and the proper moment having come, burst free from his tormentors, and disappeared in a thick wood a few hundred yards away.

Here he remained for about an hour, and returned at the end of that time entirely altered in appearance, his naked body having been daubed with grease, and then sprinkled with goose down, which, adhering to the grease, gave him a most extraordinary appearance.

The instant he was observed, the medicine-men advanced to meet him ; but avoiding

them, he walked into the hut, and carried forth, one by one, articles of apparel, cooking utensils, and ornaments ; these he distributed among the tribe, accepting, in return, a peculiarly coloured blanket, a large rattle, and a helmet made of feathers and hair. 'The rattle especially is a badge of office.

He was now fairly installed as a medicine-man, and the ceremony being concluded, the feast began. This was just what one might expect, a scene of gluttony and excess, ending in a strange attempt at dramatic representation, which, being of an entirely new character, amused me very much.

We were conducted into the chief's hut to see this performance, and found everything arranged with wonderful exactness, a curtain formed of blankets fastened together being suspended across one end to hide the dressing-room. The seats for the audience were piles of mats, and every inch of ground was soon covered by eager spectators.

Then, all being ready, a strange noise was

heard behind the curtain, and after an interval of scratching and growling, the chief clothed in panther skins rushed out, and began running round and round, growling and gnashing his teeth ; having thoroughly impressed his subjects with his ferocious appearance in this guise, he retired, and re-appeared as a bear ; then as the rising sun. The appearance of this was imitated by an ingeniously made mask, which was formed of stiffened hair spreading out like the rays of the sun, and moved by means of a string at the back. This scene lasted a long time. He then finally retired, and took his seat beside us ; and other men of the tribe took their places on the stage, and gave us a representation of a jealous husband, a love scene, and finally a fight between a wolf and a chief.

It was a curious exhibition, and introduced, on this occasion, entirely out of courtesy to us ; and one we acknowledged by presenting the chief with a few cigars and a gaily coloured china pipe. The latter pleased him

immensely ; he handed it round and round for inspection, every one breaking forth into great delight, and comparing it with what in our eyes was much more curious, their own slate pipes. Of these I obtained one to bring home ; it is about a foot long, and formed out of a thin slab of common writing slate, beautifully polished, and carved into grotesque figures, standing, lying, or walking along the tube. The bowl is very small, generally the head of a figure hollowed out, and the mouth-piece frequently a reed inserted into the tube, as of course the labour of holding such a heavy pipe must rather deteriorate from the gratification of imbibing the fragrant weed.

“ This some affirme, yet yield I not to that,
‘Twill make a fat man leane, a leane one fat,
But this I’m sure (hows’ere it be they meane)
That many whisses will make a fat man leane.”

Tobacco seems to be the great link between all men, and the pipe soothes away half the difficulties in life, both among naked

savages and the most civilized of men. I am a perfectly unprejudiced judge, and don't smoke, but everybody must feel for those who like it, I suppose.

But to return to our Indians, who certainly deserve a few more words* before parting. During this visit, short as it was, I gained a good deal of information as to the habits and peculiarities of these people, which I shall insert here. When one of them dies, his body is laid upon a raised platform or couch, erected in the middle of his lodge. Here it is left for nine days, to be seen and visited by the tribe; upon the tenth the funeral pile is erected, and a great gathering of friendly tribes and families takes place. The corpse is laid upon the top of the pile, the wife or wives of the deceased, lying alongside; here she must remain until the presiding medicine-man permits her to rise, which permission is seldom accorded until she is terribly burnt. Even now her trials are not over; she must collect some of the oily matter which exudes

from the burning flesh, and rub it over her own body, and if the limbs (as is frequently the case) of the body contract from the heat, it is her duty to keep them straight, and all this in a blazing fire of gum-wood. Should the wretched woman get through all this alive, she has to collect any remnants of charred bones, and tying them in a bundle carry them upon her back, day and night, for three years, at the end of which time she is free to take a second husband—a trial I should scarcely imagine likely to find many brave enough to attempt.

A chief generally has a great feast when he takes a wife, and the more he has, the better pleased are his people; one or two wives, however, are looked upon as head, and share the fate of their lord and master.

There is no such thing as medical remedy except by incantations and absurd ceremonies, some of them too horrible to describe. As an example, I shall give one, though I must premise a very mild one. The case was

one of fever, which, being looked upon as a spirit, is treated accordingly ; the medicine-man, seizing the affected part with his teeth, biting the piece out, and devouring the same, amidst the shrieks and gesticulations of those around. The poor patient must not, however, cry out, or the cure is ineffectual, and the spirit will return immediately. If the sufferer lingers on, the trial is repeated, when frequently enough he dies from the pain and excitement.

The natives are naturally polite and courteous, and take a pleasure in shewing their native customs to strangers ; the chief always calling you brother as a mark of kindness, and feeding you with the most tempting morsels, picked out and presented with his fingers.

But let us continue our adventures ; the promise made by our host to shew us where the deer lay was gladly kept, and starting early we had a good long day before us. He took us off towards the north-west, and

after a difficult and tedious walk over some of the wildest ground I ever crossed, we reached a glade environed by high rocks, but glowing with the richest foliage; in this he said we were sure to find a herd. The certainty with which he spoke gave us confidence, and we pushed on, forgetting our fatigue in the momentary expectation of sighting the deer.

The chief himself led the way, rifle in hand, now suddenly making our hearts bound with anxiety, now lowering our hopes by shouting in a peculiar way, in fact calling the deer, to ask where they had hidden.

We had almost reached the head of the glade, when he suddenly stopped in the very middle of a yell, and throwing himself down listened attentively; presently he glanced back at us, and whispered,

“They have spoken and are coming.”

In spite of the absurdity of such a proceeding, there was something so impressive in his

face and voice, that we believed him at once and crouched down waiting for his orders.

“ Back, hide,” he whispered, and we crept in behind some rocks, scarcely venturing to breathe ; the wind, such as it was, came right down the valley, and thus prevented the deer getting notice of our vicinity. On they came, a herd of fourteen or fifteen fine full grown elk, the leader carrying his magnificent antlers well back, his full eye and distended nostril being plainly visible, as they were close before us. When some chance noise alarmed him, he stopped, struck his foot passionately upon the grass, and snorted ; then he wheeled round and dashed up the steep bank, followed by the terrified herd.

Poor fellow, his days were numbered—he fell at the first shot ; two more shared his fate, the others getting off. Much to my chagrin I could claim no share in this day’s good sport, my rifle missing fire in both barrels ; and as we saw no more large game, I had not an

opportunity of making up for my misfortune.

We parted from the friendly chief with many acknowledgments of his kindness, carrying with us only a portion of one of the deer to serve as supper, for we were obliged to sleep on the hills, the distance to the boat being still very considerable. Nor was this precaution thrown away, as after toiling for several hours we were obliged to stop dead beat, even our eccentric Yankee guide saying, he "guessed he was considerably used up," although he insisted upon us proceeding, and pretended to look sulky when he could not move us.

After a rest, we set about finding a shelter for the night, and our guide, who, as soon as he saw we had made up our minds to act for ourselves, regained his good nature, soon constructed a truly sylvan bower by piling up branches beside an overhanging rock; and I can assure my reader I never wish for a more delicious couch than I slept upon that

night, composed as it was of sweet fresh grass, and covered in by a canopy of green leaves.

In the morning we were again on our way, invigorated and refreshed by our rest, and ready for any amount of fatigue. The sunrises in this part are magnificent. The sky is generally one flood of golden or crimson light, with a few heavy clouds hanging as if suspended mid-air ; a soft hazy vapour rises from the trees, and as if touched by a magic hand everything starts into life in an instant, gentle breezes sweep through the forest, the leaves

“Clap their little hands with glee,”

and songs, or, rather as they seemed to me, hymns of praise, rose from numberless birds, all sweet (for what bird ever uttered a really discordant note?) to welcome in another day.

From the top of the hill we first reached, we looked down upon a rocky valley bounded on the opposite side by high mountains, which our guide told us, ran down to the sea, coming

down in steep precipices, and in other places leaving wide reaches covered with loose sand; this range ended abruptly close to Valdez Inlet, leaving a wide prairie, beyond which again rose the first of that range forming a barrier along the east coast, terminating in the wild headland of Cape Scott. These mountains present a formidable coastwork and have given rise to the prevailing notion that this division of Vancouver's is totally unfit for cultivation, an idea wholly unfounded, as the interior has never been explored.

Upon gaining the top of the last range of mountains, we looked directly down upon the Gulf of Georgia, Valdez lying to the left. At the foot of the mountains, lay a pretty little lake through which runs the proposed communication between the Gulf and Barclay Sound already extending a good way by the Allerni Canal. Several boats lay in the inlet, one of which we concluded to be ours, and in consideration of having already spent two whole days of our leave, we deemed it

advisable to get on our way as fast as we could.

We found our crew strangely impressed with the idea that we had met with an untimely end somewhere in the hills; and having made no secret of their fears, they had roused the little settlement to a general excitement, so that we were received almost as a miracle, and welcomed in the most enthusiastic manner, rather, I believe, disappointing our amiable friends by coming in such perfect safety.

There is a large village of Comoz Indians close to the Inlet, but, to all appearance, not differing in any material point from those we had met with, so I shall leave them to profit by my former description, and continue our cruise.

At Point Holmes we landed, and had a walk after small game. There is a good deal of open prairie here, principally growing wild clover and camas, just the sort of land, settlers look out for, sheltered from all bad winds,

and possessing a ready water communication with Victoria and Frazer's River.

We filled our bag with partridges, and were soon again running up the coast, with a fresh wind and our crew pulling heartily.

The coast is very pretty, with soft rich plains extending inland for some way, and up to the base of the great range, behind which we could see the snowy crest of Conuema Peak towering in majestic grandeur. I felt a strong temptation to pay this Pacific monarch a visit, which project was looked upon as a symptom of madness by my companions.

Night was setting in as we reached Cape Mudge (I wonder why it got such an ugly name), and finding the passage for some distance further must be taken with the tide, we were compelled to wait until midnight, when we started again—the tide obviating the necessity of oars, and thereby resting our crew sufficiently to enable us to reach the mouth of the Salmon River next day.

I have said nothing about the line of coast

we have just passed, simply because there is nothing whatever to say of it ; it is a dense mass of mountains, their steep sides thickly covered by dark pine forests. The passage we had just run so speedily is considered impassable for large sailing ships, though light steamers can coast along in safety, and small traders often effect the passage with equal luck, facing even this danger to save the time occupied in going round the island.

There are very few rivers in Vancouver's, the only ones we remarked, in running up the east shore, being the Cowitchen, the little stream flowing from the lake near Valdez Inlet, and the Salmon River, a large fine stream, the source of which has not been explored. It flows down a valley, where there is a peculiar bend or break in the mountain range, each end curving inland and running up into the interior. The mouth of this river is a favourite rendezvous of the natives during the fishing season, which begins pretty regularly in October, and was now just opened. The

banks were covered with tents or leafy houses, and perfectly alive with little black children, running about in every direction, as free and unincumbered as nature made them, giving you the idea of a gigantic ant hill.

Their usual mode of fishing is with a long stick and hook, which they drag through the water, and what we call "gaff" the fish. Another method more in vogue, and, I believe, borrowed from the Columbian Indians, is a trap, formed by driving tall stakes into the bed of the stream at certain intervals, between which are twined branches of trees to prevent the fish escaping. Two holes only are left, and into these are fitted the mouths of funnel-shaped baskets, two or three in a length; as soon as these are full of salmon, they are drawn ashore, and either exported and sold to traders, or prepared for winter use, in the following way.

They are split down the back, laid open, the bone, stomach, &c., taken out, the fish wiped dry with grass, then laid into a large

tub, and well covered with salt. Here they remain until they become sufficiently firm. The water which has gathered round them is boiled, and when they have been repacked in another barrel, is poured over them in a boiling state; the bung hole of this barrel is all they leave open, and round it they raise a ridge of clay to collect and save the oil they prize so much, which rises to the top. This oil is the favourite perfume of the native ladies, and is carefully preserved for future use.

During the spawning season, a great many fish are destroyed merely for the sake of the roe, which is esteemed one of the greatest delicacies eaten in the kingdom, and is used perfectly rancid, forming a horrible repast.

It was great fun watching the native salmon fishers. Their excitement and loud shouts when they caught a large fish, and yells of laughter when an unguarded movement capsized a boat, and sent her crew and fish back into the water were most amusing. Many of the salmon were enormous, from

thirty to forty pounds weight, and, when cooked, most delicious.

We went some distance up the river in our boat, and landed in search of deer, having been told there were a great many in the vicinity.

We toiled manfully all day, walking our legs off, as people say, and after all saw only three deer, of which one of us (not I) shot one, wounding another. In spite, however, of our disappointment on this head, I think none of us regretted our hard day, for certainly in no part of the world could we have met with a prettier or more varied ramble.

In parts were the larger forest trees, mostly of the fir tribe, but diversified by cedar, oak, white maple, and the beautiful arbutus, not forgetting the tree fern, of which our English plant is, as I think I have before said, the miniature.

Wherever the sun is permitted to penetrate the dark depths of the primeval forest, myriads of flowering plants and gay creepers spring

up to court its smile, and the latter, clinging and twining themselves from branch to branch, form festoons of beauty it would be difficult to give a true idea of in writing. Along these festoons numbers of little brown squirrels hop, delighted with the swinging to and fro of their floral ropes, now stopping to peer at you with their comical, old-fashioned looks, now vanishing like spirits, to appear, immediately after, upon a branch at the very top of some tree. I believe many of the settlers look upon them as fair game, and shoot them at once, but I would just as soon have thought of shooting and eating a monkey as one of my merry little friends.

During our walk, we came upon many strange and interesting geological forms. In some places great blocks of granite lay poised on each other as smooth and correct as if just chiseled, or a great mass of green stone, resembling malachite, would start out as if breaking from its tomb in the dark grey rock.

But a truce to geology, I know nothing of the science, and shall leave it to be described by older and wiser men ; and I daresay some of those great authorities of whom we hear so much will, some day soon, give us their opinions on the geology of this interesting island.

At day-break, a boy reached us from the chaplain, whom we had left at Vancouver's, with a message telling us our ship had unexpectedly gone round the island to settle a native insurrection, and we had to join as soon as possible.

CHAPTER VIII.

“Their high mettled steeds, well used to such things,
Jump their dykes, walls and hedges as if they had wings.”

HUNTING SONG.

THE rumour which had reached us was perfectly correct, and just as we came in sight of the entrance to Esquimault, we had the satisfaction of seeing our ocean home getting quietly towed out—very pleasant, was it not, after giving up our leave! The only thing now remaining was to put the best face on the matter, and find out if any orders had been left. We found there had, to the effect that we were to follow as quickly as possible.

This was easier said than done, the journey, though but a few miles by land, being a stiff one in a boat (our only mode of travelling). The very unpromising account of the journey given us at Esquimault decided us upon going across to Victoria, and finding out from some of the government people the best way of proceeding. So, paying off our crew, we hired a sort of spring cart, and made our way to Government House. There everything was in a ferment; the Governor had accompanied the ship, and settlers were coming in from places bordering on the disaffected tribes, fearful of sharing the fate of the man who had been already murdered. But to explain the whole outbreak, I must allude to a prevailing superstition, and that is, that a great man can only die by the special malignancy of one who has power with the Evil Spirit. To all white men this power is attributed, and, naturally enough, they become objects of fear and suspicion, and upon them is frequently visited the untimely death of a favourite warrior. In the present

instance, a wealthy farmer had been ruthlessly murdered, and the Governor, finding every demand to deliver up the assassin treated with contempt, and learning, moreover, that there was a bad feeling, amounting to a desire for actual hostilities, prevailing along the western coast, decided upon at once establishing an understanding upon the subject, and demonstrating his authority.

The part of the coast nearest the headquarters of the tribe was called the Gap, about thirty miles up to the westward, and it was to this point we were to make our way.

After a great deal of difficulty, we succeeded in hiring a boat, with a native and his wife to paddle us up, our movements being hastened by the report brought in by a farmer, that the natives had gathered in great force and were determined to attack our men. No time was to be lost, and we set off late in the evening.

Although both wind and tide were in our favour, and we availed ourselves of the double

work of oars and sail, so strong was the current against us that we were six hours in making the last three miles ; and on getting alongside before daybreak, we narrowly escaped being fired upon. When we did make them understand who we were and had got aboard, I found my cabin in the possession of a friend, and had to serve a process of ejectment.

Next morning we were told off for a landing party, and encamped on each side of a hill, on the only clear ground in sight of the ship, this being a necessary precaution when dealing with savages. A deputation was then sent off to the Indian chief, who with his warriors had assembled at a village some fifteen miles off. Here there was a conference ; we insisted upon the guilty man being given up to justice, and explained to them that any act of violence would be visited upon the whole tribe.

Although they listened to all that was said with respect and decorum, they had evidently no intention to accede to the request, and as

the speaker grew warm, they seemed to be amused, and taking no pains to conceal their mirth, they laughed in his face, and told him “he might catch him if he could.”

After a long talk there was an equally long silence, then a private conference, and finally they came round and announced they would give the murderer up, if we gave what they considered proper payment. This was in reality what the Governor expected. He was quite prepared to offer a handsome equivalent, and the bargain was soon completed by an agreement on their part to bring the man down to the ship next day and carry back with them the blood money. So this formidable matter ended; they came down faithfully to promise, the man was hung in their presence, and the prized blankets, fish-hooks, &c., &c., liberally distributed, with which the treacherous wretches departed in great glee.

In this instance, I saw the operation of powdering with grease and goose-down again,

the poor wretch who was hung being covered thus to meet his fate.

Not feeling quite confident of the further observance of the treaty, we made a cruise up as far as Nootka Sound, and then looked in on our way back to see what they were doing.

Barclay Sound, which we put into on our way, is a lovely spot, and sheltered by rocky islets, up to the very shores of which you can sail in deep water. Some of the islands are inhabited by native families who subsist by fishing. The country round Barclay is rough and wild, covered with brushwood, and I should imagine a good game country, and favourable to a farmer who did not expect to find his ground ready made; a feeling, I imagine, rather prevalent among the emigrants who seek Vancouver's, and consequently the bad reports sent home.

Clayoquot Sound, or harbour, comes next. A bar runs across the mouth of the harbour, upon which a heavy sea breaks at

all times; but once over it, you have open ground before you, and good shelter. One arm of the harbour runs a long way inland, and makes the journey across the island a great deal shorter. The country here belongs to the Clayoquot Indians, a large and powerful tribe, with kindly feelings towards the traders. Here we remained a couple of days, being invited to a feast by the Chief.

The Governor was very eager to accept the chance of seeing more of these people, and acquiesced.

The feast was a great affair, held from daylight to daylight, and consisted principally in consuming an enormous amount of whale's blubber, salmon, &c., &c. One of their dances merits description; it is known as the "medicine-mask dance," and is performed on special occasions by the medicine-men, taking its name from the masks worn by the performers. These masks are made of a light wood, carefully painted in brilliant colours, and stuck all over with gay feathers. The dancers are

dressed in coloured blankets, and have their rattles in their hands. Thus equipped, they form a circle, and go round and round to a slow humming noise (something like a whole swarm of bees), changing occasionally into what they are pleased to designate a song. This dance is by no means amusing after the first novelty is over, and becomes horribly tiresome when continued until the dancers one by one drop down exhausted. Gambling of course was in high repute, and continued all night.

These Indians are all flatheads, and one or two tribes indulge in another, and, I think, even more hideous disfigurement, in the shape of a wedge of bone, which is inserted into the under lip when young, the aperture being gradually enlarged, so as to permit a piece of wood three inches in circumference to be placed in it, the size denoting the dignity of the wearer. The Babine Indians, on the mainland, were, it is said, the originators of this practice. Some of the dandies of the male

sex wear nose rings, upon which is put a shell, or glass bead, if they are fortunate enough to possess a large enough one. From Clayoquot harbour to Nootka a very high sea runs, and, except in mild weather, renders it dangerous to go too near the coast. The country, though bounded by steep rocks, is to all appearance flat for some distance, and covered with a richly-coloured wood.

I have before alluded to the fact of Cook's visit to Nootka, which boasts of being the first portion of Vancouver's discovered; and the settlers here delight in calling Victoria a new station, speaking of its progress in a patronizing way, and utterly ignoring their own insignificance. By comparison, Nootka, in fact, is the mere shadow of a settlement, and principally in the hands of the Indians, a tribe by no means the most amiable, and rather inimical to settlers. In most of their characteristics they closely resemble their brethren, the only outward distinction being a darker complexion, and a peculiar fashion they have

of inlaying the upper lip with coloured glass beads, which being passed under the surface skin, and shewing plainly through, give them a very odd though by no means ugly appearance.

The surrounding country has been represented by some people as producing coal, but experiments prove the fallacy of this assertion ; it does, however, grow good timber, and with a little care will, I am confident, amply reward agriculturists.

A year or two ago, numbers of whales were taken at this point, but lately they have diminished considerably, owing to the war carried on against them by the whaling companies ; the same native method of catching them as I have described as being followed out on the eastern coast, prevails here.

I cannot say our cruise up the west coast was very interesting, perhaps because we were under orders, or still more probably because the novelty had worn off. The weather, too, was changing, fogs were clouding the sunny shores,

and for the present the pleasures of society at Victoria had more charms for us, so that we were nothing loath to find ourselves on the way back.

The Indians at the Gap were all quiet again, and looked very different fellows when they came down to welcome us, having dispensed with their ferocious war paints, and laid aside their magical caps ; altogether looking as jolly and happy individuals as you could expect to see. This time we came to anchor in the harbour of Victoria, and were next day inundated with visitors and invitations. Picnics, balls, dances, were the order of the day, and the blue jackets had everything their own way.

We rode, danced, and made love to our hearts content, and began to think even Valparaiso dull compared to our present quarters.

Among other methods to draw people together, and pass their time in pleasant company, hurdle races were planned, and great was the excitement that followed.

The naval officers had the entire manage-

ment, and some of us were in every race. I was one of the stewards, and appointed to select the ground, which was a difficult matter enough, and cost a good deal of rambling about, and no small disputing among ourselves for a time. Indeed the thing was nearly knocked on the head, some of those who were most eager at first, giving in, and beginning to talk of a cricket match instead; while we plucky ones said the cricket might follow, but for the present the difficulties must be overcome somehow. And perseverance gained the day; the ground was chosen and staked off, and the hurdles made.

The entries were numberless. Every one owning a horse came forward, quite convinced they had a first-rate chance of winning the tempting prize, and upon the eventful day the ground was literally crowded, not only by the beauty and fashion, the horses and horsemen, of the island, but by troops of natives, dressed in their gayest costume, who appeared early in the day. The first match

came off with great *éclat*; one horse got over the fences, but the other ten went through them beautifully, the first making a gap, through which the others faithfully followed.

The second race now began. This was to be the volunteer one. Twenty horses being brought forward by their respective owners, to be ridden by any one coming forward at the moment, half-a-dozen naval men made their bows in silk jackets of various colours. The horse which fell to my share was a great raw-boned beast, fresh from the Columbian prairies. He had legs and bones enough, but not a word could I learn as to whether he had ever jumped; in fact, I became doubtful as to his having been even ridden, from the way he winced when I got into the saddle. There was nothing for it, however, but to do my best; and this I had several inducements to do, first and foremost that I was the champion of the North in the mess, and so must ride for the honour of my county.

My hopes rose a little when I found, on a

preliminary canter, he could gallop, and I began to feel, if I had moderate luck, I might do the thing.

Bang went the signal, a big gun, and off we went, slap-dash at the first fence, a good thick cactus hedge. My charger tried to run through it, but got such a scratching that he flew a couple of feet higher than every fence afterwards. I had no power over him more than keeping him straight. He took the lead almost directly.

Looking back once or twice, I saw the field scrambling along, tumbling over the fences pell-mell, a messmate of my own and a man from the flag-ship leading the mob, and their horses beginning to see that they could jump, soon stole up, and we had it all to ourselves for a way. Then the flag-officer's horse (the favourite) balked a fence, and threw out my friend's excellent grey. My horse, who had his head down, never turned an inch, and the heat was ours ; my friend coming in second, the flag a bad third.

After twenty minutes' rest, and no end of talk and ices, the second heat came off.

Two of us went at the cactus-hedge abreast, and kept neck and neck for a short time. Then the other horse strained himself and left me alone, and I thought I had it all my own way; but my messmate had learnt his horse's power in the first heat, and came up with me at this point; on we went, as closely matched as possible, and took the last rail side by side. The rival horse barely recovered himself, and that only by his rider's capital management. We had then a close race over the flat, my horse winning by a neck.

The proprietor of the horse I had ridden came up to me in a furious rage, telling me he meant me to ride the horse quietly, and not to win that race, but the next, and that he had lost his money in consequence. I told him I rode for my own gratification, not his, and could judge of a horse's powers for myself. Then presenting him with the spurs, I said I knew he intended me to ride for the next race too,

but that I did not mean to do so. He then altered his tone, and made many polite speeches, none of which reached my heart. By great good luck I had kept up the credit of my county, and did not mean to run a chance of disgracing it.

After the races were over, we had a splendid dinner given by the Hudson's Bay officers, everything being done in first-rate style, and with great taste. It was rather a trying occasion for me, on account of my health, as winner of the great race, being proposed, in acknowledgment of which I stood up, and presently sat down again covered with confusion, and amid the cheers and laughter of the party.

A day or two subsequently, when our fun was at its height, the melancholy news came that we were to go over to the Frazer River, and wait until the diggers were all down.

Great lamentations followed ; but duty before pleasure. And after all, we should have

a chance of seeing the very heart of the colony ; and this, to my idea, rather lessened the pain of leaving our pleasant quarters at Vancouver's.

CHAPTER IX.

“To the west, to the west,
To the land of the free,
Where the mighty Missouri
Runs down to the sea.”

FORT LANGLEY, the lowest port of the Hudson's Bay Company, lies on the left bank of Frazer's River, and is about twenty-five miles from the entrance. It took us a long time running up as we did under sail, the current being very strong, and dead against us. We found pretty good anchorage off the Fort, and were soon beset with boats, many of them full of miners, waiting for a chance of getting down to Victoria.

The town consists of a number of streets

built at right angles to each other, well paved in some parts, but utterly neglected in others, a neglect which is all the more inexcusable as the whole district is full of good stone. There are very few shops, except eating and drinking-booths, at this season reaping their full benefit, and doing a first-rate trade in relieving the fortunate diggers of their gains.

The country round the Fort is flat, rich, and a capital agricultural district, only wanting men who have a little capital to start them, strong arms, and some knowledge of the nature and rotation of cropping.

Frazer's River, rising in the Rocky Mountains, receives a tributary from Stuart Lake at Fort George, and from thence to Fort Langley is continually increased by large and small streams, gradually attaining an important size; indeed it is now fully understood that ships of considerable tonnage can safely proceed as far as Fort Hope, fully seventy miles higher up than was supposed. A steamer might readily ply up and down, and find it pay well

too, as the diggers are always in a hurry; first, in ascending, to get to their destination and reap the golden harvest before them—secondly, in descending, to be able to spend what they have gathered. At the time we arrived, the town was full of them, the bad weather having set in rather sooner than was anticipated. Men were arriving every day from the different rivers, some with immense gain, all with something.

I was by no means edified by the specimens I saw of the digging fraternity, many of whom looked thorough-going ruffians, and up to any sort of villainy. The first day I spent on shore I saw enough of them to cool any desire for further intercourse, and I was heartily glad to join a friend on an expedition up the river, thereby escaping the necessity of meeting the only men we could see, and at the same time getting an opportunity of making use of our own eyes, and adding a few pages to my diary, already grown to a formidable volume.

The gold district, properly so called, begins at Fort Hope, where we rested the first night, and found we could purchase nothing but bad potatoes and dried salmon, with the most atrocious fire-water, called by courtesy rum—more poisonous stuff I never tasted. The boatmen were not, however, of the same opinion, and drank it like water, finishing our share as well as their own, and laying in an incredible supply for the journey.

Our private catering consisted of tea, biscuits, and dried beef; to this we added dried salmon for the men, and having made the enquiries we deemed necessary for our route, we left the Fort gladly enough.

We proposed making our encampment at the junction of the Thompson and Frazer's Rivers, but, before reaching this, we had to make the portage of the Falls, up which ships cannot go, and boats require to be dragged by a towing rope, or if light are carried along the mountain path. The first difficulty we

experienced was a short way above Fort Yale, where, from the precipitous nature of the rocks on either side, the body of the stream is compressed in a much smaller space, and rushes down with incredible force, bearing every thing before it. Instead of wasting our time by towing up, we took the advice of our boatmen, and landing, divided the weight the best way we could, and made a portage.

During our walk, we had a good view of the surrounding country, and had we been able to spare time, nothing I should have liked better than to ramble off with my gun, and try what was to be found in the thick woods stretching on either side.

In this country the principal woods are all evergreen; fir, pine, cedar, cypress, &c., &c. Even in the depth of what is here called winter, you see no leafless woods, or brown autumnal tints; all, and every where, bright rich green—I think even richer in winter than in summer, the November fogs freshening up

the foliage after the dry heat of the midsummer months, and giving every withered blade and leaf a new vigour.

The whole of the country lying on this side of the Cascade Mountains is open to the enterprising farmer, and under the present laws of the colonial parliament, any British subject may take possession of one hundred and fifty acres of unclaimed and unsurveyed land (except the mining parts, or those given up to the Indians); and all he has to do is to record his claim before a magistrate, with a plan or description of the land, paying a fee of eight shillings. When the land is surveyed by government, he acquires full title for himself and heirs by the further payment of ten shillings per acre; or, if before this survey is effected, he so chooses, he can sell his land and guarantee the purchaser's full title, &c. To judge from the appearance of the country, it certainly possesses advantages I never saw elsewhere, and offers great inducements to a small capitalist.

would amply repay a small outlay, which owing to the nature of the country might be very small at first, whole prairies lying absolutely ready for the fire plough, while sheltering forests with splendid timber, and abundance of good stone, would render building and fencing a very simple matter—indeed in some places it is difficult to divest oneself of the idea that some long forgotten race have farmed the same rich plains.

Above the Falls, gold is found in every direction, and we continually came upon traces of the diggers. A large party of Indians were scattered about, picking up anything left or forgotten by the diggers; and finding them inclined to be friendly, we accepted their invitation to accompany them to their temporary village.

Our ready acceptance appeared to please them immensely, and a man was sent off at his best pace to announce our approach, and notify the honour to their chief, whose

authority they held in great reverence. Our stoppage at the Falls had taken up so much of our time that the shades of evening were threatening ere we reached the village, and the fires looked particularly inviting in the dim foggy twilight.

The village, was just like those on Vancouver's, excepting only the numbers of horses picketed in every direction, which signified their sense of our approach by loud neighing long before the dogs barked.

They had made active preparation for us, and we were conducted to the chief's lodge immediately. Here we found the great man waiting, surrounded by his warriors and his favourite wives, forming a background of dark beauty.

The picture was both wild and striking; the lodge, a very large one, was only lighted by a wood fire in the middle, which was replenished now and then by grease, or a kind of gum. Round this crouched the natives in every describable attitude, their

eager faces, dark eyes, and sparkling white teeth lighted up by the fitful firelight, while, when an extra flash sprang up, you caught a glimpse of the ladies of the harem, many of whom were half-caste girls, and very pretty.

All the Indians present were dressed in their ornaments, and some painted, while the chief and some others wore high helmet-looking caps of gay feathers, painted and worked with beads or shells, and one or two of them had bunches of bright feathers stuck in the hair at the top of their heads; others had gaily dyed blankets. Altogether there was colour enough for an artist's eye, and certainly variety of expression enough to employ the pencil for many an hour.

I let my friend try his powers in conversation, while I made use of my eyes. Fred found the chief knew a little English, having traded with the trappers for a long time; and when we were at fault for a word, he seemed to know exactly how to supply

its place by a sign or look, both equally expressive.

He first told us he was delighted to receive and honour an Englishman, and if we would stay with him for a while, would shew us how to kill bears and wolves ; but hearing that we must go on at daybreak he seemed disappointed, and tried hard to persuade us to change our plans.

Supper was soon presented, in the shape of boiled salmon and dried deer meat, both, luckily, pretty fresh ; and as their mode of cooking on hot stones keeps in the juice and renders the meat soft and delightful, we made a capital meal, finishing off by some of our own tea. This latter beverage the chief had tasted before, and liked amazingly, particularly when a little brandy was added ; and I should be afraid to state the number of times we replenished our tin tea-pot. Very few of those who tasted it came back, and so the chief had it all his own way—the others uttering exclamations of

astonishment as cup after cup disappeared down his throat. Seeing how much he liked it, we presented him with a small packet and a little sugar, both of which were, in our hearing, set apart for the chief's own consumption, and after being carefully enclosed in two or three papers were hung up at the roof.

The chief now tried hard to make me give him a little silver flask I had; but this I would *not* do, so we sent to the boat for an empty soda-water bottle, which seemed to give equal pleasure.

After the tea-drinking part of the ceremony was over, the medicine-men recited some wonderfully long histories, during which Fred began to snore. The chief, seeing he was asleep, with a politeness I was quite unprepared for, broke up the meeting, motioning the singers to retire. One by one they all rose and departed noiselessly, looking, to my half-sleeping senses, like figures in a dream. At last, only the chief and I remained with

Fred. His Highness then rolled himself in his blanket, and, pointing to Fred, signified we ought to follow his example, and very soon added the music of his nasal organ to that of Fred's, beating him hollow, for I must say I never heard anyone snore so loud or keep it up so long as he did. Accustomed as I was to noises of all descriptions on board Her Majesty's frigate, it was nearly daylight before I could go to sleep.

Daylight saw us again *en route*. The banks of the river are, during the salmon running season, completely crowded by Indians in pursuit of the fish ; and multitudes are caught and dried for winter stores, not, however, in the same way the Vancouver Indians follow, as, in this case, the fish are dried in the sun, not packed in tubs. Sometimes they are smoked ; and these will keep for years, only requiring to be steeped for five or six hours previous to cooking.

At a place called Spuzzum, about six miles higher up, we crossed the river, and coasted

up to the Forks. The country now wore a different aspect; the woods became thinner, and the grass shorter and less rank; the undulations of the ground, and the pretty, park-like groups of trees, made you think you were in Old England.

These plains were formerly visited by herds of buffaloes, but of late years they have been scarcely seen, and now only appear on the prairies bordering the Columbia River, and much higher up than the mining districts.

On our way up, we met several parties of diggers toiling down, many of them without boots or shocs, or hardly any clothing whatever, at least half of them being clothed in Indian blankets, cut in rude imitation of a coat, having, they told me, cut up both coats and shirts to patch their trousers. Yet, in spite of all their hardships and short fare, they were a fine, healthy, hearty lot of fellows, and here, on the wild prairie, and removed from the temptations of civilized life, as jolly companions as I've chanced to meet.

I could scarcely believe my eyes when I was accosted by some of them three weeks afterwards on our return to Victoria; and the change quite explains the fact that, so long as the magistrates can keep up their authority in the towns, there will be no need of strict supervision in the outlying places, where men are hard at work and cannot get drink.

Our expedition puzzled some of the miners very much, and they tried hard to convince us we should only have to get back again as fast as we could, or be starved out, and looked perfectly incredulous when we assured them we were going to have a look at the country. About noon, we arrived at our destination. I believe the exact distance from Fort Langley to the Forks may be one hundred and sixty miles.

This station is rising in importance, and will, I doubt not, some day not far distant, be a flourishing city, and the dépôt of an agricultural community. Nature holds out her hand, and says, as plainly as a splendid

climate and good soil can do, “Come and try me.”

Perhaps a word or two as to the capabilities of British Columbia (New Caledonia) as a settler’s home may not come amiss; at any rate, I could not refer to the subject at a more fitting place than here, in the very heart of the country, as yet so little known to the emigrating public, and, to my idea, the very gem of a farming district.

In the first place, the climate is favourable, with an equal temperature; in summer, cooled by northerly breezes, and in winter, softened by south and south-west winds. Snow seldom remains more than seven or eight days on the ground, and the rains are never so heavy as to cause inconvenience. Spring shews her smiles in April, and in July and August summer is at its height.

The land is first-rate, and while it presents none of those difficulties in clearing which damp a settler’s hopes among the backwoods of Canada, it has only to be turned over to

bring forth an average crop of any grain you choose to put into it. Taking it in comparison with Canada, I think there can be little doubt as to its superior advantages ; and to back my opinion, I shall give that of a near relative, an experienced and long-resident Canadian farmer. Writing to me on the subject, he says :—

“ I shall give you what information I can, and as for myself, I think there is no comparison between this country (Canada) and British Columbia and Vancouver's. My reason is founded upon these facts. Here we have six months of dead winter—on the other side, from two to three. Here, in November, the grass is killed by the frost, and you must stall-feed your cattle—there they can run out all winter, and only require a little extra feeding or shelter for a night occasionally. Here, as early as November, the ground is too hard to plough—there you can go on much the same as our midland counties in

England. Here, our crops of grain average per acre, wheat fifteen bushels, barley twenty bushels, oats twenty, peas twenty, potatoes one hundred, rye fifteen. Turnips do well occasionally, but the open season being so limited, it does not pay to sow much, so many extra hands being required to hoe them.

“The main objection to the Canadian climate is the short time permitted to a farmer wherein to provide food for his stock.

“To make our manner of proceeding clearer to you, I shall take the course of our summer, beginning with April, when, in a fair season, the frost is out of the ground about the 15th, and winter over.

“Now the busy time begins, repairing fences, ploughing grass land, then ploughing for seed. Oats, barley, and peas must be in by the first week in May, potatoes and turnips by the first week in June, and during the interval (generally a month) the haymaking begins. You must plough your summer fallow, and get through it all somehow before July, as

after the first you have the hay season ; and then, scarcely giving you time to recover your breath, comes the wheat harvest, then oats and peas, all of which must be sown before the beginning of September, the fall wheat having to be in the ground by the sixth, a week earlier or later making a wide difference in your return next season. After all this hurry, you generally find half your corn still out, even after the wheat is up and green ; so that September is gone with ploughing, and the store bills falling due, you must set to work raising the money to meet them ; and thus October is taken up threshing and getting grain to market ; and then comes frost and winter. Yet great as our hurry has been, of course one might save much, if able to afford to hire enough men ; but few farmers can give the high wages they demand.

“ Everything is done in a hurry. The very summer seems in a hurry to get away from us ; and it is this hurry that prevents the grain coming to perfection, while, if you wish

to save all your crops, you have to pay away your profits in hiring labourers.

“The changes of the weather, too, are very sudden, one or two days intensely hot, the next dry and cold, so that I have seen crops looking green and unripe, almost shaking two days after.

“Another disadvantage a man taking uncleared ground has to contend with, is the large timber covering the ground, which it will cost him from £2 10s. to £3 per acre to cut down, burn off, and fence ; and even after this you have to plough round the stumps for about ten seasons, as they are almost the only things that do not hurry themselves to rot out of your way.

“Now I have given you a picture of this side of the continent, we shall turn to the west. In many of the districts of New Caledonia, Vancouver’s, &c., you can take up an open prairie, and a fire clears off the rough, while the ashes form a capital insect-destroying manure ; you have wood and stone at your right hand, and abundance of time and good

weather in the cropping season. Harvest comes just at the right time, when you can put all your strength to it, and there is no need of anxiety about getting it in, or your cattle starving in winter. All your English crops thrive, and many tropical plants seem even to improve there ; fruits ripen beautifully, I believe ; in short, everything seems to bespeak prosperity and comfort, with what to us farmers is the greatest comfort of all, the certainty that industry and care will enable us to lay by for our old age, and furnish our children with the wherewithal to brighten their first start in a life of independence."

From this letter, it would seem the western coast has many advantages over Canada, particularly to a poor man, and it is for such that one ought to look to the advantages of emigration. A man with a fortune can go, and if he likes thrive anywhere, while others do his work ; but when a man's property consists of a few hundreds, or sometimes, after his pas-

sage is paid, not even that, it becomes a great matter to him to seek out a place where he can work for himself, and, with the help of his family, save hired labour.

CHAPTER X.

“‘ What a scene were here,’ he cried,
 For princely pomp or churchman’s pride,
 On this bold brow a lordly tower,
 In that soft vale a lady’s bower.

* * * *

How blythely might the bugle horn,
 Chide on the lake the lingering morn.’”

SCOTT.

MUCH as I should have liked to pursue my way to Fort St. James, the present dépôt of the Columbian colony, I had no time to do so, our leave being too short to admit of it; so I was obliged to rest content with what I could gather from men who had been there. The Fort is the northmost station of the Hudson’s Bay Company, and is situated at the south end of Lake Stuart, which is a lovely piece of water, surrounded by scenery pronounced

to be unsurpassed by any in the world ; the climate is even milder than near the coast, and the communication by water easy and cheap.

Intending to try what we could do with our guns on our way down the river, we only stayed a day and night at the Forks, and started down stream, making excursions into the country at any likely places. Game seemed scarce, and we saw neither bears, wolves, nor deer ; perhaps the passing up and down of the miners had frightened them further inland. Be this as it might, we saw nothing of them, and the only thing worth mentioning on our first day's journey back, was an Indian burial-ground.

It was situated in a pretty grove of trees ; the long, coarse grass had been pulled up by the roots, and a close turf had sprung up in its place, whether artificially or by accident I know not. The belt of forest on either side was of dark pine trees, which threw a sombre shadow over the resting places of the natives,

giving the ground a peculiarly solemn and funereal appearance.

“ We watch o'er the rest of those we love best,
And shade each lowly bed,
While nightly we weep in sorrow so deep,
Hopes from the living fled.”

Every separate body is laid in a canoe, richly carved, and either raised from the ground upon wood supports placed upon a rock, or hung from the branch of a tree, a precaution taken to prevent them being torn by wild beasts. They have a method of embalming dead bodies by baking them some time, and then rubbing them with a decoction made from various herbs, the recipe for which they keep a great secret. In and round each canoe are placed articles for the use of the deceased in the future life, and all the cooking utensils are carefully broken or pierced to prevent them being a temptation to robbers. All that the dead have possessed in the way of ornaments, trinkets, &c., are hung upon them. In some instances, even the mouth is filled

with rings, beads, and shells. Some of the bodies were much more elaborately dressed than others, and showed symptoms of recent care, which spoke strongly for the affectionate disposition of the people. Although in life their women are treated as inferior creatures, they share honours and distinctions with the greatest chiefs after death, and one of the most richly adorned canoes I saw was that of a woman.

Our first night on the route was dark and foggy, and the spot we chose for our bivouac, a little way up the mountain from the regular track, was in the most sheltered nook we could find, with a rocky background overhung with fern trees, and protected in front by a thick belt of wood, through which we were compelled to force our way, in order to reach the spot we had chosen.

After lighting a fire and cooking some birds we had shot, we rolled ourselves in our blankets, and feeling quite secure, fell fast asleep—at least, I believe the others did.

I lay awake for a time listening to the melancholy moaning of the light wind through the trees, and the hollow roll of the river. Not another sound broke the silence, and the thick darkness seemed actually to hang upon one and oppress the senses.

At last I too slept, how long I know not, but I was awoke by a choking nightmare, and found myself gagged and bound, unable to move or speak, and had the satisfaction of witnessing the same process served upon the rest of the party. Presently we were all staring at each other in blank dismay ; while our four assailants, as blackguard-looking villains as one could meet with, rifled our pockets, ate and drank all they could lay hands on, and then swore we were “all damned cheats, that they had tracked us for diggers, and that to pay us off we might stay where we were till doomsday.”

So saying, they took themselves off, leaving us in a pleasant frame of mind.

At daybreak, benumbed and half dead with

damp and cold, one of the men got his gag off, and hallooed to some purpose, bringing another party to our assistance. Speedily we were all staggering to our legs again, and almost inarticulately, from the pain inflicted by the gags, giving an account of the whole proceeding. It seemed the gang who had come upon us bore a truly terrible character ; and we might consider ourselves uncommonly lucky to have got off so easily, as they seldom left a party without a few throats slit, and seemed to think nothing of knocking a man on the head.

Numbers of the returning miners had fallen into their hands and been eased of their wealth, while many who resisted had been knocked over, or never heard of again.

This gang continued their depredations until winter fairly set in, and then, gathering their wealth together, divided it and set off for different places; travelling one by one through Victoria, where they succeeded in escaping discovery, by shaving and dressing

themselves. One, I believe, went home to England with something like twenty thousand pounds, bought a place, and is in society; another crossed to America; a third was taken up and executed in Victoria for stabbing a woman in a drunken row; and the fourth, I believe, spent his money, and went back to the diggings like an honest man. Such was the history of the gang, and such their end.

I was minus a few shillings, a pretty ring, and my dear little flask; while my friend lost his watch, more money, and a pocket-book with some invaluable keepsakes in it.

After our nocturnal adventure, we had no sort of excitement except one or two capsizes out of the boat on our way down, but spent a very jolly time with the men who had picked us up, and who proved capital travelling companions.

In going down we did not take the trouble to make a portage, but took the usual Indian plan of shooting the falls. This perfor-

mance consists in getting the canoe well into the centre of the stream, and then, by dint of ballasting and steering, keeping her head straight, and letting the current bear her along. Difficult and dangerous as it appears, the boatmen and Indians are so fearless and expert, that accidents very rarely happen, and then seldom beyond a good wetting.

After rejoining the ship at Fort Langley, we lay there for about a fortnight, during which our only amusement was in riding and duck-shooting.

All the Indians are fond of horses, and ride well without any saddle, and only a strip of hide twisted round the horse's nose to act as bridle. They take off even the slight clothing they usually wear, and appear perfectly naked. The horses all run out on the prairies, and when a fresh one is required, it is caught with the lasso. As soon as the Indian can get up to the prostrate animal, he gets on his back, unwinds or cuts the lasso, and rides

the horse until he has subdued his fury, and brought him to own his master.

We often accompanied the Indians upon their wild horse hunts, and had many a break-neck gallop after them, and often great fun. Altogether it was a wild, exciting sport, particularly as they always took a few loose but thoroughly trained old horses to attract the wild ones ; and it was wonderful to see the way in which these would scour the plains and come back at the slightest call or whistle, always bringing a companion, or sometimes a whole herd within reach.

Another sport in which we joined is, I believe, peculiar to the Pacific Coast Indians, and consists in wild calf hunting. The proper season for this is when the wild calves separate from their mothers ; but in some cases it is followed as a pastime, and then the calves are the produce of tame mothers, and are turned loose and goaded to desperation. The hunters gallop up to them in their flight, and watching an oppor-

tunity, seize the upturned tail and throw the animal heels over head, when, stunned and helpless, it is at the mercy of the butcher.

In the proper season, the Indians go up the country to plains frequented by buffaloes, and are accompanied by their whole families with bag and baggage.

It would seem that when the buffalo cows wish to wean their progeny, they secure the co-operation of the bulls, who, placing the cows in front, form a guard between them and the calves, which are unmercifully butted if they attempt to trespass beyond the space allotted to them.

To separate the calves from the main body is the first work of the hunters, and this they accomplish by dividing their party, one giving chase to the whole herd, while the second party, from their intimate knowledge of the habits of wild animals, can station themselves in ambush at the place where fatigue will oblige the younger animals to lag behind, when the hunters

drop in between them, and oblige them to turn aside from their course. They are then enclosed like a flock of sheep, and driven quite in another direction, and so far off as to prevent the herd hearing them, in which case a charge has been known to take place, the infuriated cows fighting gallantly for their young.

As soon as the calves are by themselves the great fun begins, and hundreds are soon capsized and sprawling or dead upon the ground.

Wishing very much to see before leaving Fort Langley a calf-hunt, we persuaded the Indians to shew us a sample in the manner I before mentioned, with tame calves, and great fun we had, most of us getting a roll when we attempted the tail experiment.

After this expedition, the Indians consented to try their luck upon some plains down towards the Columbia, where, though the season was early, there might be a herd; and as we promised to pay them well in

either case, we got a good party, and made them leave their wives, &c. behind, taking only enough for a quick journey, and their best horses.

Our party was rather a large one, and certainly jolly ; it consisted of five officers from the ship, a couple of gentlemen diggers, a couple of Yankee anything-you-likes, and three settlers, the latter old hands at the sport. We were soon on capital terms, and our evenings were enlivened by song, jest, and story ; some marvellous enough, and certainly numerous enough to fill a book, the Yankees eclipsing us all in their account of their adventures both by sea and land.

On the morning of the third day from our start, we reached the first ground where the beasts were likely to be found, and here a party was sent on ahead to keep a look-out, while the rest of us divided and took separate routes down each side of the hill.

The valley I was in was rich and beautiful, studded with fine old trees, and en-

livened by a rippling brook, dancing along amidst flowers and sunshine. As we progressed cautiously along the banks, I could see fish of some sort shooting about, or rising to the surface and splashing back with a gleam like lightning. Presently one of the advance party met us, with the intelligence that they had come on a recent trail, and that though too late to inspect it that evening, we might do so next day. Great was our excitement, and we novices expected to see a shaggy head appear at every turn of the pathway ; but nothing of the kind happened, and night closed in without a sign of the beasts. Usually, at this season, the nights draw in damp, cold, and foggy ; this, however, was mild and clear, a happy change from the preceding one, when we had shivered round a blazing fire, and spent the night wishing for the morning.

That night, wondrous tales of buffaloes were told round our camp fire, and if half were true, I am sure any member of the party

ought to be ever after looked upon as a perfect hero. I listened, half believing, half doubting, and yet too much excited by the prospects of the morrow, to be very incredulous. At last feeling sleep to be necessary, each lay down in whatever spot looked most tempting, and settled himself to his repose.

The night was, as I have said, clear and warm; a bright starlight sky stretched overhead, and the pretty little crescent moon sailed along the horizon, just showing light enough to make the stars close beside her look pale and cold. The fires burnt red and low, and each was surrounded by a strange-looking circle of upturned feet. Now and then the bark of a prairie dog, or the long howl of a wolf, was heard in the still air.

I lay awake, listening with an irrepressible intensity to these wild sounds, until, with my nerves thrilling with an undefined awe, I got up, and turning up the valley walked on in the quiet night. A turn soon shut out the

gleam of the fires, and left me, to all intents and purposes, alone in the plains.

I stood awhile gazing up to the glittering sky, and listening for any chance sound. Nothing, however, but the voice of the prairie struck my ear; so, grasping my rifle, I went on, and presently reached the open plain, over which thrilled the wind. I stood and listened, trying to make out the landscape. Upon my left rose a hill, and towards this I turned, and was soon stumbling up it, feeling all was right so long as I was ascending. I had not climbed far, when I obtained a full view of our camp fires, and very picturesque they looked, some, recently replenished with gummy pine logs, sending their forked tongues high in the air, others shedding a dim, dark-red glimmer, brightening now and then as they were fanned by a breath of wind. Content that I was safe enough while within hail, I continued my ascent, and was soon upon a little table land forming the top. Here I sat down, and looked at the dim view round me, my im-

agation filling up the indefinite outline. Gradually I grew sleepy, and rolling myself up, lay down under the shelter of a large stone, and was soon fast asleep.

I fear the reader has been expecting my walk to end in some adventure. I regret very much nothing extraordinary happened, but I assure you a good sleep was to my unromantic ideas the most sensible termination to my walk, as well as preparation for the fatigues of the next day.

The chill air which comes just before sunrise roused me, and getting up, I took the bearings of my situation. Almost the first thing that met my gaze was a dark mass moving slowly across the light-coloured prairie grass ; it was still too distant to distinguish more than a compact body, but whatever it was it was drawing nearer. I strained my eyes until every thing danced before me, and at last grew convinced it could be nothing but the herd of buffaloes of which we were in pursuit. Having arrived at this conclusion, I did not

tarry to look, more than to make sure of the direction they were taking, and then ran down the hill as fast as I could, and astonished my friends at their breakfast by my breathless haste. Very soon, however, my excitement was thrown completely in the shade; the Indians whooping, yelling and jumping about like maniacs, while my friends were tightening their girths and begging to be off.

The Indians now sent forward a scout, who, returning, told us that the herd, having evidently been turned, were now making for the upper plains, and as they must pass through the valley, our best plan was to conceal ourselves amongst the brushwood until they entered, and then charge upon them.

Our horses now began to shew symptoms that they too knew of the approaching herd, and stood with dilated nostrils and quivering nerves, just as you see an eager hunter at the cover side. Some of them were soon covered with white foam. It was truly an exciting moment, and one which tried a

man's patience not a little. In the first place we were obliged to remain perfectly still; in the second a turn and projection in the valley hid the entrance, so that the buffaloes must be actually below us before we could see them.

There was an Indian or two stationed upon rocks commanding a view, and presently a long shrill whistle denoted the expected approach. We crouched back, when, just as ill luck would have it, a breeze sprung up, and blowing straight past us, carried our scent to the bulls, and almost immediately after a signal was shouted, telling us they had turned. Not a moment was to be lost, down we dashed (our horses as eager as ourselves) along the valley, and into the open ground.

The buffaloes were scattered about in every direction in evident confusion, and uncertain which way to turn. For a minute I felt as one in a dream, and was more than half inclined to turn and put a safer distance be-

tween myself and the ugly-looking cattle careering about before me, their strong necks and thick fore-quarters giving uncomfortable ideas as to what one might expect in a personal encounter.

The Indians, meanwhile, dashed in among the animals, and singling out a body of calves, began their capsizing business. Rifle shots and loud shouts added to the confusion, and after several attempts to keep together, some more enterprising animal broke the spell and led the way over the plain ; and as our especial object was to procure veal, we confined our attention to the calves.

Next day, some of the hunting party guided us home, while others remained to cut up and dry the meat.

I have little more to say of the Fort, and that little I shall confine to an account of the Indians.

I was present at one of their greatest feasts, one given in honour of the election of a chief—a ceremony meriting a description.

It would appear that when a chief becomes too old or feeble to govern his tribe, a meeting is held to elect a younger one ; nor is it by any means certain that a son or even relative of the deposed chief will be chosen—the election depending entirely upon the favour of particular signs, ruled and guided by the pretended magic of the medicine-men. Whoever is chosen is perfectly secure of finding obedient servants and the ready approval of every one, none daring to dispute the choice of a medicine-man.

Immediately upon the man selected becoming aware of his good fortune, he retires into the woods for a certain time to commune with the good spirit, who is supposed to come on purpose to instruct him in the best method of governing the people and fulfilling the trust reposed in him.

During the time of seclusion, the tribe are in a state of great excitement, and like an army without a general, few venturing upon even hunting expeditions, lest, by any evil

chance, they should see the chief, in which case death is their certain fate. This superstition is so strong, that even though the fortunate man may have been alone, and "though seeing unseen," he voluntarily comes forward and gives himself up, lest, haply, some unnatural fate should meet him direct from the Good Spirit whom he is supposed to have offended. If, on the other hand, he is seen by the chief, that worthy is compelled, by the same superstition, to execute him on the spot.

The duration of this voluntary seclusion depends upon the man's health and strength, his food being always exhausted many days before he returns; and when he does make his appearance, he is a hideous object, unwashed, emaciated, torn with wild shrubs, and his blood-shot eyes glaring with the fire of insanity.

He comes back at the dead of night, when all are at rest and unsuspecting, and the first notice of his return is his appearance in a lodge, not through the door-way, but by tear-

ing away a portion of the roof, through which he scrambles down, and seizing one of the inmates with his teeth, tears off a mouthful of flesh, which he swallows. He then goes to repeat the same scene at another and another hut, until perfectly exhausted, and in a measure intoxicated by his horrible feast, he falls down in a sort of trance, in which state he may continue some days, eating nothing, and unconscious of everything.

The poor wretches who have contributed to the chief's repast must bear their agony in silence, merely stopping the bleeding by the application of eagle-down or a plaster of pine gum. The wounds sometimes heal, but more frequently mortify and end in death, a consummation looked upon as rather a happy result, and leading the sufferers directly to the regions of the blest. Indeed, so great is the credit with which such scars are looked upon, that many of the young Indians make artificial scars, and pretend they have been thus favoured by the chief.

These Indians have a strange custom in regard to the dead, somewhat resembling the Irish wake. As soon as a man is dead, invitations are sent to his friends, &c. The bearer intrusted with these invitations, stalks into a hut, utters the chief's name, in a loud commanding voice, and sprinkles the inmates with goose-down. There being no lodge sufficiently large to contain the number of guests, one is erected for the occasion. As the company assemble, they place themselves in rows, sitting cross-legged upon mats; and up and down these rows the eatables are piled at regular intervals. These consist of bear, buffalo, beaver, salmon, blubber, and berries of various kinds, mixed, many of them, together, and are served upon calabashes or carved wooden plates. The more refined guests eat with a wooden spoon, the nearest relatives of the deceased chief acting as hosts, even bearing round the dishes, presenting them with a polite request to eat, and pressing any reluctant visitor with great hos-

pitality, a favourite expression being “ Eat and fill yourself—do not hesitate, there is more to come.”

After eating as much as they can, the sports of the evening commence with singing and dancing ; in which, however, having eaten so much beforehand, few are able to do much. After this generally follows a theatrical display, just like those of their Vancouver neighbours ; the whole affair ending in a general exchange of gifts, and a long farewell song.

I cannot say I was sorry to leave Fort Langley. The idea of getting back to our friends at Victoria was very pleasant, and as we looked upon the pretty shores of Esquimalt again, I felt quite as if we were going home ; and, certainly, the welcome we received did not fall short of what we had expected, the orders for our return having become known as soon as they were issued, and before we knew anything of them ourselves.

CHAPTER XI.

“This holly by the cottage eave,
To-night ungather'd shall it stand,
We live within the stranger's land,
And strangely falls our Christmas eve.”

IN MEMORIAM.

OUR return to Vancouver's was celebrated by a ball given by the bachelors of the island ; rather a touching mark of their generous disposition, and one we duly appreciated, seeing that before the event was notified, we voted them the greatest bores we knew, but now, acknowledging how much we had wronged them, we henceforth swore by the jolly bachelors of Victoria.

The ball went off capitally, the room was decorated with green branches and flowers, while numberless arbours were ingeniously contrived for the sole and only purpose of love-making. The Union Jack was plentifully displayed in our honour, and the ship's band took their turn at waltzes, polkas, &c., distinguishing themselves greatly, and all getting very drunk before the last quadrille. One of our fellows, who had acted as band-master during the voyage, was in great wrath, and, in his endeavours to keep the men quiet, got so much excited himself, that more than one person gave him credit for being in the same state as his unruly men.

After the ball was over, some of us accompanied our friends to their homes, and danced till daylight, getting a cup of coffee and a furtive peep at our partners in the morning light, before we parted.

Winter was now at the full, and Christmas being nigh at hand, there seemed a general wish to make it as much like an English one

as possible, and by wearing bright colours, and making large fires, keep up the remembrance of dear Old England. At night every one danced and played Christmas games ; and at last, when a real shower of snow fell, how we enjoyed it, every one turning out to walk, the ladies with gay petticoats and strong boots, the counterpart of those we had left at home. Ah ! little some of them knew how even this familiar sight cheered our hearts, and gave a spirit to our letters, or how astonished their sisters over the water were when they heard of it — as, like many more absurdities of the like kind, those in a civilized country, like England, imagine any one living in a new colony must be a semi-barbarian. I can only say, let them go out and see.

On the first day of the snow, I walked out to the country to pay a visit to a family I had just received an introduction to, and found the mother and two daughters out on the balcony, well shawled, and enjoying the snow. While we stood chatting and watching the

flakes floating about in the still air, as if reluctant to touch the earth, the sky grew darker and the landscape so white that you might easily fancy *yourself* in Old England again. So thought I, and so said my hostess, and forthwith launched into a description of the winters she had seen in the north of England, when the roads for miles were impassable, and dinner parties were compelled to be guests for days, or trust to a cart and four strong horses to drag them through ; and when the windows were piled up, only admitting a ray of light—how, too, in her girlhood, she had ridden out duck-shooting with her father, carrying the game-bag over her crutch, and holding his horse while he stalked a flight of wild ducks ; then the gallop home through the snow, with tingling nerves, and how the well-filled bag was spread out on the hall table for her mother's approval, where the welcome blaze of fire-light seemed doubly bright after the blue sky and piercing night air.

As she went on, I listened intently. She

spoke of my own country, and I felt myself back in years gone by—years of hopes never again to be fulfilled, and of happiness which still throws its light over what is now. I looked in my hostess's face as it glowed with the memories she was recalling, and could not help wondering why she had left so much that she loved and prized to come to such a far-off land. The enigma was explained, for almost immediately after her husband and two sons entered ; and then very soon I saw and heard why she had left England, and saw, too, that with such devotion as existed between herself and her noble husband, the world she sought was by his side ; and though familiar objects were cherished for the sake of a joyous girlhood when no worldly care had broken into her happy home, the matron's lot was incomparably better, nobler, and happier. She told me her story afterwards, and a few words will tell it again ; and as an example of what may be done, I think it will be useful here. For years after her marriage, she and

her husband had struggled on through many difficulties, poverty, sickness, and the misconception of friends ; and then seeing nothing but disappointment before themselves and children, they boldly decided upon trying the New World. For a time, like many other persons of their station in a new colony, they had many privations to endure, but they overcame all by love and mutual trust. Health and wealth came day by day, and, when I saw them, they were settled on their own land in a pretty house, built by themselves partly. Their eldest son was fighting his way to distinction in the Queen's service, and the two younger ones were still with them, one preparing to go into the navy, the other determined to stay with his father. Such might be the lot of any settlers who were determined to make a home for themselves.

I have already said it was Christmas time, and the very mention brings thoughts of mirth and jollity, dear old merry Christmas, season of good fellowship and kindness, when stran-

gers become friends, and friends grow warmer than ever. Last Christmas I had spent at home, surrounded by loving brothers and sisters, and with a parent's voice to wish me, God-speed and a merry New Year. This, I was thousands of miles away, in body, but I well knew the sailor son was not forgotten, and that my absence left a solitary place in their mirth. I believe every man on board thought as much of home and its associations as I did, and this very thought made them more sociable and pleasanter companions than ever. Thus all was good-humour, and I never remember a jollier Christmas than that spent at Vancouver's.

Every one had an engagement for Christmas night. But, like all other joys, Christmas passed away, and almost one of the first things to warn us of the lapse of time was the English mail, bringing the Christmas letters from home. With it, also, I heard of my appointment to a ship only then on her way out. This was welcome news, for although I

liked the old ship, I should now have a better chance of promotion, and with common good luck might soon call myself Captain.

By a little favour from my commanding officer, and a letter from home to the kind old admiral, I got leave to wait the arrival of my new ship, and quit the old one as soon as I liked. So I was soon in lodgings in Victoria, surrounded by my little belongings, and with at least a month at my disposal, leaving me time, if properly managed, to see something of the often written of Columbia river. Winter is the only season the route by the Columbia, and across the Rocky Mountains is practicable. The road is partly along the bed of the river, and must be taken when its higher waters and its numerous tributaries are frozen; as soon as spring melts the icy bands, the river fills, and the road becomes impassable.

While making arrangements for my journey, I paid several visits to the Indians near Victoria. The largest village is that inhabited by

the Callum Indians, and as I heard they were first-rate boatmen, I saw a good deal of them in my search after a crew. They flatten the head, and like all tribes following this hideous custom consider themselves as various tribes of the same nation, however much they differ in language or manners.

After some deliberation, I decided upon going to Olympia, on Admiralty Inlet, and then find my way to Fort Vancouver's across the country. Having settled this programme, I hired my crew, got in my stock, and was soon off on my solitary travels.

Our voyage over to the mainland was somewhat rough, but the Indians managed famously, and we encamped safe and sound on the shores of Admiralty Inlet, at the settlement called Olympia. Here I found I could procure horses and guides to go to the Cowlitz River, down which we could take a boat to the Fort. The first part of our journey was through as fine a country as I could wish to see; well wooded and watered, with a short

rich looking grass, and just the sort of undulations to make a landscape picturesque, while Olympus towered in the distance veiled in eternal snow. Large herds of semi-wild cattle were feeding on the plains, and sometimes when we came upon one unexpectedly, it looked inclined to have a tournament with us, a piece of amusement I by no means relished—as these beasts were much larger than buffaloes, and very ugly-looking customers to an indifferently mounted man.

We saw several Indian encampments, and reached one just at sunset, where we found a hearty welcome, and a great many more symptoms of civilization than I had ever met with before amongst the Indians—a circumstance, I suppose, accounted for by the frequent passing to and fro of Europeans, many traces of whose presence and gratitude we found remaining in various domestic comforts. Nearly all the warriors belonging to this tribe had some memento of their white friends, and, generally speaking, the women wore cotton

petticoats, many of home manufacture, made from the wool of the sheep running wild upon the neighbouring plains. These Indians are flat-heads, and seem to live a quiet happy life, and leave all their hard work to their slaves, of whom they possess a great number, and treat very kindly.

Upon the banks of the Nasquilly River is a large farming establishment, belonging to a company called the Puget's Sound Company, and very useful in supplying a great quantity of corn and potatoes to Vancouver's, at less expense than almost any other station. From thence to the Cowlitz River the route is generally supposed to be rather difficult, but I found the Indians capital guides, and perhaps, owing to the season of the year, I was exempted from many of the dangers which have filled the adventures of many travellers.

Early in winter, and when the frosts have set in, the ground merely cements over, and a bottomless depth of mud is left below; as winter advances, the crust grows thicker, and

you can pass over it with perfect ease ; while, on the other hand, if you wait until the frosts are breaking, the surface is again softened, and though passable, becomes very dangerous.

After passing Mud Mountains, we arrived at Cowlitz Farm, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, and inhabited by a number of steady-going settlers, who have succeeded in bringing the country to a state of high cultivation. Wheat is very good, and is raised in large quantities for exportation. The Indians are hospitable, and very friendly to the English. I only stayed a few hours, just long enough to hire a boat's crew to take me to Fort Vancouver's, and intending to sleep on board, I started at once.

I was awake at day break, and gazed with delight upon the picturesque banks of the river, along which we were going at a good pace, the men having engaged, for a certain amount of extra pay, to land me at the Fort in less than forty-eight hours.

Immense forests of pine trees clothe the

banks of the Cowlitz, some of them the largest I have ever seen, their grey moss-covered trunks rising like pillars in some old cathedral. On an island I saw an Indian burial-ground, but had not time to land, and cared less to do so, as to all appearance the spot was precisely similar to those I had seen before.

The only thing of any real interest was a chase after a wounded deer, which we witnessed. We were going quietly up the river, when a deer was observed galloping along the bank; presently we made out that he was closely followed by a small troop of wolves, who were evidently gaining upon him, and with my telescope I could see the flakes of foam flying from his lips, while the distended nostril and eye plainly bespoke a long and severe chase; the wolves themselves came along with drooping tails, and their tongues hanging far out. After watching him for a minute or two, I saw him approach a bend of the river; a precipice lay

immediately in his path, and at the base ran the stream. He never paused, and whether it was merely from fear, or that he actually could not stop, he bounded straight over, and fell into the river some ninety feet below the surface ground. He disappeared entirely for a second, then rose a little way down, and made for the opposite shore.

Meanwhile, his pursuers, baffled by his sudden disappearance, stood upon the top of the rock ; but gaining sight of him as he rose, in an instant they scrambled down. The pause, however, slight as it was, and the force of the stream, had placed a considerable distance between them and their anticipated prey. The instant they took to the water, my rifle was at my shoulder, two shots rang in the air, and a couple of the rascals turned over with a howl, and floating down, dead, effectually stopped their comrades, who besides now caught sight of our boat, and turning tail, were soon scrambling up the bank, at even a faster pace than they came down. I gave them a parting

benediction, and sent off one of them howling a by no means musical song. The poor stag had got to shore, and was trotting off towards the plains, apparently instinctively aware that, for once, man had proved a useful ally.

Next morning the Columbia opened full upon us, and a splendid sight it is, too wide, however, to see its full beauty, but you can imagine what is hid from you by looking at the bank nearest. A whole fleet might have sailed abreast up the stately stream. We toiled and pulled against the current, and soon lost sight of either bank, nor did we catch a glimpse of the right until nearly within sight of our destination, which we reached just at daybreak, the boatmen accomplishing their promise in a couple of hours over the prescribed time. They all got gloriously drunk that day, and gave me such a name for liberality in the Fort, that I was actually beset by boatmen with offers of service for my passage up, all stating a sum doubled, if not trebled, through the representations of my late crew.

Directly upon my arrival, I went on board H.M.S. —— to see some old friends, and persuade some one to join me in my trip, not much relishing having only Indian companions all the time. I found I had just hit the right time, as two men had been anxiously waiting a chance of a shooting excursion, and hailed my plan with great delight. Our arrangements were, however, to be made, and seeing that a boat and crew were required, and great care necessary in the selection of the latter, we could not calculate upon getting off under a couple of days. Meantime, I dined on board, and made a very jolly excursion into the country on horseback, besides seeing all that was to be seen of the Fort.

It appears that Fort Vancouver was one of the earliest and largest stations of the Hudson's Bay Company. It is well and strongly built with fortifications of pickets, protected in various parts by guns, and with a volunteer police.

It is under the charge of a Governor placed

there by the Bay Company, and is apparently well and carefully managed.

The voyageurs, or men who act as boatmen, form quite a separate community outside the walls of the Fort, and when I went with my friends to get a crew, I was almost deafened by the confusion of tongues—Chinooks, Chinamen, Crees, Sandwich Islands, &c., &c., all shouting, one against the other, the merits of their boats, and different charges—rather a hopeless case to distinguish good from bad; but by dint of a few recommendations we at last succeeded in selecting a crew who afterwards turned out to be, one a Hawaiian, two Yankees, and the others half breeds peculiar to the place. The last were decidedly the best; they are a fine strong set of fellows, brought up on the river, and possessing a perfect knowledge of its many dangers and changes, and added to this, the coolest courage I ever witnessed.

We had to pay a portion of their wages in advance, and every one of them got drunk

within an hour afterwards, bothering us considerably by asserting that they could not by any human possibility start ~~next~~ day ; but seeing that we had determined, and finding the Governor was our friend, they all appeared at the rendezvous in time, the Indians perfectly sober, though I cannot say so much for our Yankees.

Before leaving the Fort, I should like to tell my reader a few particulars of the neighbourhood into which, as I said, I made one excursion. The country is rich and well wooded with oak, pine, &c., many of the trees attaining an enormous bulk ; these forests are infested by herds of wild cattle, whose progenitors were originally brought from California, and allowed to run wild for several years, until they became so numerous that, like those in the Sandwich Islands, they were obliged to be driven to the plains and hills ; and it is by no means safe to ramble far into the forest, particularly during the calving season, as ten to one you are greeted by a

sharp reminder from an irate old cow, and your ambition to be at the top of the tree gratified in a manner more expeditious than agreeable.

Most of the neighbouring Indian tribes are Chinooks, with a sprinkling of a race called Klickatals, and again all are flat-heads.

They are a very good sort of people, not addicted to any great vice except drunkenness, and are inclined to imitate the Europeans in every way. They live peaceably, and are gradually becoming industrious, although naturally one of the laziest races in the world; in fact, so lazy that they will often suffer great privations rather than take the trouble to bring fish, &c., to exchange or sell to the settlers. They possess very few comforts compared to some of the tribes. Their favourite blanket is made of rat-skin, and is very soft and warm, folding round like a piece of velvet.

During the storing season, that is to say, while they are engaged laying in a supply of

fish, &c., for the winter, they live in a sort of tent much resembling our gipsy encampments, but covered with pretty green rush mats, instead of old blankets or quilting, such as you see among some of the gipsies. In winter they return to their villages and settle down, three and four families in each lodge, where they endure a state of heat and dirt it is impossible to describe.

Many accounts had reached me of their dirty habits, but really, when I saw them at the very season in which I had a chance of judging fairly, I thought them dirtier even than I had imagined they would be.

When we entered the village, I saw no one moving, but presently a head was popped out of a lodge, then a greasy, sleepy-looking Chinook appeared, redolent of putrid fish, and shining with natural oil. Then ten or a dozen more shewed themselves, and one or two invited me into a lodge.

I put my head in, determined to see all I could, but I assure the reader I drew it back

quickly enough, and have often puzzled myself since as to how it was possible for any being to live in such an atmosphere—an atmosphere that combined all the dreary horrors of the Black Hole of Calcutta with the concentrated essence of every evil perfume in existence. My friends did not venture upon the like experiment, and laughed heartily at my wry face.

I obtained a curious specimen of a pipe from one of these Indians. It was a long tube, the stem covered with eagle-skin, and a sort of outwork or fan of goose-wing feathers stuck together, and supported by a small rod, the whole gaily coloured and decorated with beads.

I believe it had been stolen. As to this however I made no enquiry, but paid the price demanded, too much delighted at possessing such a trophy to ask questions. But the Governor assured me he had often attempted to bribe the Indians to sell these pipes, and been refused with the greatest horror—every

one of them showing that to commit such an act was little less than sacrilege.

These Indians, like the others I had seen, are all fond of racing and gambling. They follow much the same method as I have described in my chapter on the Frazer, and turn their horses loose on the plains during the cold season. The trouble they have to catch them again is incredible, as the animals mix up with wild herds, and travel a great distance, getting just as wild as their new companions.

I believe the Indian often travels for a month before falling in with a herd, and then he just lassoes them, indiscriminately taking the first that comes, which he mounts, and rides until the animal is worn out, and owns his victor's power by obeying him afterwards. *He is then kindly treated, and taught to obey the voice rather than the bridle, which is only a leatheren thong, and not calculated to be very useful.*

I saw one Indian horse, that obeyed the

slightest movement of this accompanied by the voice, grow perfectly savage when a light English bridle was put into his mouth, and after trying for half-an-hour to throw his rider, bolt with him at a headlong gallop. The Indian only stopped him by leaning forward and slipping off the bridle, when, after letting the horse gallop a little further, he spoke to him, and he stopped as quiet as a lamb.

Their horses are rough, fiery little beasts, and can gallop very fast, though, I should think, not equal to long endurance. The breed is improving now by the introduction of some better horses from America; and I heard of one enterprising settler who had got a couple of sires over from England, and sent one to the Columbian settlement, so that the breed will soon improve, and a change take place in the description of horse.

I heard my friends talk a great deal of the amusement they had during the calf-hunting season, and rather astonished them by an account of my experience in that way. In fact,

when I went on telling them of my various exploits, and, I assure the reader, not drawing a long bow by any means, they began to look upon me as a perfect Nimrod.

I had had so many opportunities of going on shore and amusing myself, that I really had more adventures than most of us sailors can boast of, and can look back upon numberless little sports too trivial to mention, but each having a charm of its own when mixed up with friends I may never meet again. God bless them all !

CHAPTER XII.

“The desert gave him visions wild
Such as might suit a spectre’s child,
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watched the wheeling eddies boil.”

SCOTT.

WE had certainly some difficulty in managing a portion of our crew, but on the whole they behaved as well as we could expect, and worked hard enough to let us encamp about eight miles up the river, at a pretty and wild spot, the name of which I unfortunately forgot to write down. The river, even at this distance, above one hundred miles from the mouth, is about half a mile wide, and contains an enormous body of water, flowing down in a strong but as yet unbroken stream, although

our journey next day brought us to the first of the rapids, or cascades, as they are called ; here we encamped for the night, and after listening to the yarns of our boatmen, each picked out a nice spot, and wrapping ourselves in our rugs, we lay down beneath the blue canopy of a heaven almost as bright as an English twilight, and even at this season putting me in mind of a home midsummer night.

A little later in the spring, I have been told that the plains are absolutely blue with the flowers of the wappataa, and the air heavy with their sweetness ; even now the scene was lovely in the extreme, romantic and impressive withal. The sweet low wind that, un-felt to you, breathes over the wild prairie, sings a song of its own—one I have often felt and listened to with every pulse thrilling, and my heart stirring irresistibly to memories of other days ; a strange effect this same desert song has, in thus carrying you far away to utterly dissimilar places and events. There must be some magic in it, I am sure, for I

have heard many who have listened to it say that they felt as if compelled to think of the sweetest and happiest days of their lives, and that if a train of melancholy reminiscences awoke, the song became merely a sad moaning sound. I lay awake long, and only after some hours fell asleep.

I had just lost consciousness of being awake, when a terrific yell from one of my companions brought me to my feet with a jump. I found him pale and trembling, in a dreadful fright, and it was some moments before he could speak articulately, but at last it came out that he had been awaked by a rattlesnake crawling over his face. While we were trying to convince him he was not bitten, the boatmen seized lighted brands from the fire, and hunted about for the trespasser, which I began to suspect was the effect of a dream. At last a shout from the men proved he was found, and running up to the spot, I saw the snake get his death-blow as cleverly as anything I ever

witnessed ; one of the Indians catching him across his back with a stroke from a long lithe twig, just as he was about to spring.

The ugly brute tumbled back, with his spine fractured, but even then hissing out his wrath, and rattling with impotent fury. I could not but shudder as I saw the reptile wriggling and spitting, shooting out his black forked tongue, and opening his jaws to an extent I could not have believed possible, while his eyes were absolutely glowing with rage ; truly my friend had a narrow escape, and none of us could account for the animal not biting him.

Rattlesnakes are very numerous about the banks of the Columbia, and this adventure considerably lessened the delightful enjoyment of sleeping in the open air, and the prospect of a starry canopy.

The Cascade Indians, who came in the morning to help us up the rapids, were very merry fellows, and invited us to their village, where some races were going on. I have

before mentioned the partiality of all those tribes who possess horses for racing, and seen something of it, but this was quite a Derby compared to the others.

On reaching the village, we found everything in full force, and that the meeting was held in honour of the anniversary of a great victory, the whole being finished up by their favourite war-dance. Visitors were pouring in, and the whole village presented an amusing and lively scene, the chief himself condescending to welcome us, telling us he had been on board a man-of-war, which he pronounced "manawaa."

The race-course lay about a mile from the village, and was alive with horses, fine little beasts, eager for the race, and keeping up a continual skirmishing, shrieking, kicking, and rushing about and at each other in the most outrageous manner. At length the first race came off; at least forty horses started, and then such a row began, everyone shouting the name of his favourite, and offering bets about

their chance of winning in the most scientific way.

Race followed race in quick succession, until all the horses had been tired or lost, the latter amusing termination happening several times, when, mad with excitement, a horse took to the plains, and finding he had lost all command, the rider quietly slipped off over the tail, and let the steed go whither he pleased. Some of the races were admirably contested, and all most amusing, and as the Indians ride well, there was often great interest in the trials ; I only noticed one upset, and he got so unmercifully laughed at, that I doubt if he ever showed face on the ground again.

The famous war-dance was the stupidest thing I ever saw, and consisted in about twenty men, painted and plumed, walking round and round in a circle, sometimes stamping with one foot, and all the time keeping up a most mournful chant, which I was told was a recital of the names, deeds, and deaths of the great warriors engaged in the battle

whose memory they were celebrating. The only thing I ever heard at all like it was the drone of the bagpipes, and I must say I think the Indians afforded quite as musical an entertainment as one I have heard praised in the land of cakes.

Without waiting to regale ourselves upon the refreshments offered, we divided a few cigars (always a welcome gift to these smoke-adoring Indians) and took our departure, anxious to get on our journey.

The portage of the Cascades occupied us all next day. The falls are very fine, and the river, confined between enormous rocks, leaps and rushes past with a roar like thunder ; the footpath, in some places running over the rocky wall, actually trembled with the force of the water. I saw some curious caverns on the opposite side, worn out by the floods, and into which the water rushed with a loud roar. At other places, natural bridges and tunnels were formed, making the whole one of the most picturesque and sublime scenes I had ever

seen, and I could fancy what it must have been when the summer floods rolled down.

Our men grumbled a little when, on reaching the head of the portage, we announced our determination to proceed without loss of time; but we found a round or two of rum a certain panacea, and, after duly administering the same, got under weigh again, and accomplished a run of ten or twelve miles before we encamped again. This part of the river, during the fishing season in July, is much frequented by Indians, and an almost incredible number of salmon are taken. We stayed all night here, and continued our way at daybreak, reaching the foot of the Kettle Falls at midnight.

These falls are among the most extraordinary in the world, deriving their name of Kettle, or Chaudière, from the numberless caldron-like holes worn by the constant friction of the torrent on the hard rock—within these the water whirls round with terrific force, as in a boiling kettle. The sight of such

a body of water tumbling about in a state of turmoil and confusion is truly awful, particularly when the imagination peoples the air with the spirits of the many unfortunates who have found a watery grave beneath the wild current.

In coming down the river, the boatmen "shoot the rapids," and it requires great skill and presence of mind to escape destruction. Numberless accidents have occurred, but I must say these may be always attributed to the inexperience of young boatmen, or the fears of the passengers getting the better of their confidence in the crew, and leading them to attempt to assist or act for themselves; once a boat swerves, or becomes in the slightest degree unmanageable, there is no hope for her.

Human power cannot resist the force of water, though human skill can do much, if fair and direct means are used. Thus year after year the same sad tales are told, and year after year the boatmen pass up and

down the river as fearlessly as if on the bosom of a lake.

At the Kettle Falls, the Columbia descends upwards of eighty feet; the noise of a great body of water falling such a height is deafening, and at a distance strongly resembles the roar of artillery.

Our next stage was the Dalles, which I thought even more sublime than anything I had seen before, as the river is hemmed in by enormous solid rocks, looking as if they had been torn asunder by the press of water; through this pass or channel the river pours, forming immense whirlpools in which trees are driven out of sight, and on appearing again are twisted and rent by the irresistible power of the torrent, and sometimes entirely stripped of their branches, they float down to the calm water.

We landed again here, and towed the boat by a line, rather a difficult matter, as every now and then a sudden jerk of the current would almost wrench the rope out of our

hands. The country here seemed infested with rattlesnakes, and I am sure I must have seen or heard twenty during my walk. It is by no means pleasant to see these gentlemen, and know that an unwary step may bring one open-mouthed at you.

After ascending the river a little further, we halted again. The features of the country, which had for the last few days been rugged and bare, began to change, and large forests filled the landscape, composed mostly of pines, whose bulk attracted us so much as to induce me to measure them. While so engaged, we sank up to our knees in the remains of the decayed spirals lying thick below every tree, and emitting such a pungent cloud of dust that we began sneezing as if we had been inhaling the strongest snuff.

We were keeping up a by no means harmonious chorus, when a stranger appeared on the scene in the shape of a large dark-coloured wolf. His siesta must have been disturbed by our emotion, but without waiting to gratify

his curiosity, he made off with his tail between his legs in the most ignoble manner, looking first over one shoulder, then the other, with a peculiarly ugly snarl. We had left our rifles in the boat, so could do no damage ; but loath to lose the chance, we gave chase, and had a glorious run over the open, losing our game in a thick little underbush of a prickly sort of shrub resembling the famous *waitabit* thorns of the African deserts, through which he bolted like a shot.

We had, however, done one thing, namely, marked our game, and leaving my companions to keep watch, I, as the best runner, set off to bring up dogs, men, and guns. I had great difficulty in finding my way to the boat, and still greater to guide the men to the spot where the others were waiting. Indeed, had it not been for one of the dogs striking the foot of the wolf, and thus running him, we might have looked all day. When we did reach it, my friends were up a tree, having had rather a close view of the wolf's visage

through the cover, and thinking prudence the better part of valour, wisely took refuge in an oak.

The cover in which the game lay was of an oval form, and though very dense, not large ; so we posted ourselves at various points, and sent in the dogs to beat. They hunted about for some time, keeping us in great excitement, with rifles to the shoulder, and fingers trembling on the trigger. Still, strange to say, they had not found or bolted the gentleman, and misgivings about his being still there began to damp our enthusiasm. Suddenly, yelp, yelp, howl, howl, burst from the middle of the bush.

“ Be ready !” shouted Charley.

On went the row, and such a yelling, barking, and uproar surely never perplexed mortal man.

What could be the matter ? Wolves are generally such cowardly brutes that we could hardly believe what seemed pretty evident, namely, that he was fighting the dogs.

But the noise continuing, and no sign of dog or wolf shewing, we determined to get in and see what was going on. So with a good deal of pushing, tearing, and scratching, in spite of torn trowsers (our only ones), we reached the scene of action, and then the mystery broke upon us.

The beast had taken refuge in a cave, at the mouth of which the dogs kept up their deafening chorus, jumping about half frantic, while inside the wolf sat, his tail crushed up against the furthest corner, and his eyes glowing like burning coals in the semi-darkness.

Seeing our approach, one of the dogs, a large, powerful animal, something of the Cuba breed, dashed in and grappled with the wolf, thus preventing us shooting him, which we might easily have done before, but now dare not attempt, in case of wounding the dog.

I never saw such a struggle as that which followed. The wolf was the largest, but the dog, having made the attack, had got a good

hold on his neck, and never relaxed it for a moment, while the other, growling and snapping, threw himself into every imaginable position, now rearing himself on his hind legs, now down on his back and stomach, in the vain effort to shake off his adversary, who kept his hold until he had choked his enemy. Then with a satisfied shake, he let him fall dead, and, lying quietly down, he began licking his own numerous wounds, as if he had done the most ordinary thing in the world. Of course, we gave him three cheers, and bathed him with our best brandy, even the boatmen volunteering to contribute from their leatherne rum bottles.

The wolf was an immense old fellow, and his grinders spoke of many a long year, being worn down nearly to the gum, while his tusks were the largest I ever saw. Indeed, you may judge of the size from the fact that I got one made into an erasing-knife handle, and the other I saw afterwards used as a shawl-brooch, on the smooth surface of which, one of my

friends had engraved a miniature picture of the fight. The head and skin we carried off as trophies of this memorable combat.

We now reached a part of the Columbia where it widens out to a great extent, and goes by the name of the Lakes. Several days were occupied in passing up these, and in landing now and then to have a shot at birds, either upon some of the many pretty islands or on the mainland. Still nothing particular occurred, and when we reached the regular river part again, we found the banks so densely wooded that it was impossible to land, so ran on nearly two days looking for an opening in the thicket of rushes and water-plants, which, after the forest ended, closed up into the very stream itself. On we went, cramped and tired enough with sitting in such a little boat, looking eagerly for a place to stretch our legs, which, however, we did not find until we reached the Great Battière, where, once on terra firma, we were in no hurry to embark again, and hear-

ing there were often large numbers of carraboos in the neighbourhood, we pitched our tent, *i. e.*, four or six posts, over which we spread rush mats, bought from the Indians.

Our search after the carraboo deer proved unsuccessful the first day; that is to say, we saw none in the flesh, though we came across plentiful traces of their existence, and were in consequence quite content to take our chance and wait a day or two, setting off next morning in the direction of the hills, which rose in the distance, one towering over the other, until they seemed to mingle with the sky.

Our path lay across a plain covered with loose sand, and tall coarse grass, so strong and brittle as to scratch us like thorns, fatiguing us excessively while it lasted, which fortunately it did not do all day, giving place first to a bare sandy desert, and then to a short green turf upon which we trod with the most unalloyed delight, thinking it the most luxurious carpet in the world.

After toiling on at least nine miles without

seeing any game, the change in the plain (breaking up into sudden rises, valleys, and rocks) gave us hope, and most carefully did we ascend every hillock, scarcely daring to tread lest we should alarm the timid caraboons.

At last we caught sight of a herd, a long way off it is true, but that was nothing, as we could take greater precautions now, knowing where to find them; so off we went, getting down wind until we reached the point from which we had calculated on stalking them. This we set about in the most approved manner, now on our hands and knees, now on our backs, and then stomachs; sometimes running across a little ravine, and then, not being quite sure of our distance, or whether they had moved, taking about half an hour to steal up the next rising, and almost choking ourselves by suppressing our breathing, lest we should alarm them, and growing doubly anxious after every disappointment.

I was now leading, and having propelled

myself to the top of a hill, was peeping through a bush. Ah ! there they were at last, a glorious herd, and within eighty yards of us, perfectly happy, and unsuspicuous of danger, some feeding, some stretched on the grass, all in peaceful security. We had three rifles, so each picked off his deer, and crack went the pieces ; one of the animals bounded in the air and fell, while the others disappeared like a flash of lightning ; however we were certain one was hit, and slipping the dogs we gave chase. After a long run, we caught a glimpse of them just disappearing ; one was left far behind, with the two dogs close on his haunches. We had a good view of this hunt, and at last the satisfaction of seeing him pulled down ; but long ere we could get up, the dogs had mangled him so completely, that he was of no use, and we returned to the body we had left, where we meant to make our bivouac for the night.

The sun was setting behind a range of snowy mountains, all bathed in the richest purple

and darkest blue I ever beheld, while the sky above resembled a magnificent crimson and gold canopy, in the centre of which hung the round and fiery sun.

I gazed in awe and delight, until down dropt the sun, and gradually twilight drew its pale blue veil over the glow, while softly night began her reign, reminding me of Longfellow's sweet hymn.

I heard the trailing garments of the night,
Sweep through her marble halls —
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light,
From the celestial* walls.

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above,
The calm majestic presence of the night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold sweet chimes
That fill the haunted chambers of the night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air,
My spirit drank repose,

The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,
From those deep cisterns flows.

Oh! holy night, from thee I learn to bear,
What man has borne before,
Thou layest thy fingers on the lips of care,
And they complain no more.

Peace, peace, Orestes-like I breathe this prayer,
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice prayed for, the most fair,
The best beloved night.

I have given the whole of this beautiful hymn, for although I would fain believe every one knows it, still a good thing, and such a good thing, cannot be too often repeated. Longfellow must have wandered and bivouacked in the wide and splendid prairies of his native land, to talk so feelingly of the night ; and his words rung in my ears as I watched the moon treading her silvery way, crowned with her diadem of stars, and the wondrous voice of the desert awoke the sweet sad melody that breathes on the air like the tone of a distant organ, or the faint echo of the angel choir.

I know not the cause of this phenomenon of which I have been speaking, or whether it is the change in the atmosphere occasioned by the sudden transition from heat to cold ; be it what it may, the noise exists, and travellers in the high latitudes, as well as on the plains of America and Africa, can corroborate my statement, and recall the strange effect never to be forgotten. It is as if nature had awaked to praise God, and send forth her thousand voices in adoring welcome.

We had a flying visit from a bear in the night, and were aroused to a knowledge of his companionship by his making his supper off the head of the carraboo, which he had cracked. After taking the edge off his appetite by eating the tongue and lips, he was sucking out the brains, making, thereby, a most unearthly noise, which effectually put an end to our slumbers, and thereby to his repast.

I had never heard a similar noise before, so, for the life of me, could not make out what it was. But the Indians knew it, and kicked

up such a row that the bear decamped, and though we turned out the dogs, and searched for a couple of hours, we saw nothing of him. This was a great disappointment, and more so in the end, as we did not come across another during this journey.

Next day, we reached the Rapids of the Dead, so called from a sad legend of death connected with them. Here we remained a day, hunting carraboos, which were in great numbers, but kept well out of reach, and gave us some trouble in getting within shot.

The Rocky Mountains, with their eternal crown of snow, had now been visible some days, and every mile we advanced became more clear and beautiful, changing continually in their tinting, from the chilly blue peculiar to such scenery to a light rosy pink, while sometimes a bank of dark clouds would divide the mountains, suffering their crests only to appear, like white islets in a dark water.

We were now fast approaching the end of our journey. The last rapids were left be-

hind. The river, at this point, makes long bends, twisting to and fro in a curious manner. The navigation of it would have taken us much more time than we could afford to lose, so we set about hiring horses, and went across the prairie, which was covered, in some places, about a foot deep with snow.

We had good guides, and first-rate little horses, so spun along over the smooth ground at a good pace. This plain was thickly dotted with clumps of trees, and away in front of us, belting round a white mountain, lay a dark forest, which, we were informed, we must reach before night in order to gain shelter. Certainly, the snowy prairie had few inducements to offer in the way of a good lodging, so we put our hearts to it, and succeeded in getting to the wood at dusk. And it was lucky for us we did. The night set in cold and stormy, the wind howling a regular tempest through the upper branches of the great trees, and I could hear the slender tops of the pines groaning and cracking as it swept past.

But with all this wild tempest above, we were snug and warm, having secured a spot where the thickly interlaced branches of the evergreen pine not only kept away the wind, but served as a regular roof, high over which the snow collected and formed a second covering. The ground below was thickly covered with the same kind of bed of dry spirals I have mentioned before, and when we had collected a heap of the driest, formed a deliciously soft couch.

The cones of the firs set up a bright, clear blaze, and lighting up the trunks of those trees nearest and the warm red ground beneath, gave a most romantic air to our encampment.

After a first-rate supper off some fresh meat we had brought from the last station, we retired to our couches to try to sleep. I say try, for really it was by no means easy to divert one's thoughts from the wild scene the blazing fire displayed, while the roar of the wind, accompanied as it was by so many

strange sounds, was of itself enough to drive away any symptom of rest.

I do not think I closed my eyes all night, but, spell-bound by the whole scene, lay awake, weaving wonderful tales, and watching the picturesque figures of our guides as they moved about, replenishing the fire, looking after the horses, or sitting half asleep round the blaze, while the light danced on the gay plumes that crowned their heads. Strange noises filled the air: now the crash of a branch, *breaking beneath its load of snow*, now the sharp crack of a pine-top, or the shriek and groan made by two large limbs of a tree rubbing together. With all these sounds combined, the reader may easily imagine sleep was banished; and we were still awake when the grey dawn stole over the scene, giving it a new and even more mysterious aspect.

Oh! how I wished I could paint that strange struggle between the morning light and the bright gleam of the fir cones, which,

it is well known, from the resin they contain, burn almost like tar.

When daylight did come, we found there was a heavy fall of snow; walking to the edge of the forest, we watched the great feathery flakes floating down, dancing their peculiar wild measures in the still air, for at dawn the wind fell as if stifled by the thick-coming snow. To continue our route was utterly impossible; indeed we might congratulate ourselves upon our good fortune in getting to a safe shelter, and as these storms never last long, a day's delay was all we had to fear—and really it was worth it, to see this feature in the wild scenery of prairie life.

We wandered a long way up in the forest in search of game, and got a brace of beautiful pheasant-plumaged birds, which I found were here called wild turkeys. These we roasted for supper and found capital eating.

Towards mid-day the snow ceased, but the Indians assured us it would begin again; and even our own experience of the state of the

sky told us it might be so. Added to this was the impossibility of reaching another *really* secure shelter unless we made an early, or, as they call it, a “sun-rise” start, so we consented to stay, and before dark the fall of snow began thicker than ever. This night I slept, but was awakened at least twenty times by the thundering crash of breaking trees, and was in no small alarm lest one of the branches over my head should by any mischance follow this lead, in which case, if I escaped the blow, I might enjoy the pleasure of being suffocated; but sleep got the better of my fear, and after every start I turned over and was soon oblivious to every thing, and calmly unconscious in the luxury of sleep.

The snow ceased during the night, and the blue sky giving us every prospect of a favourable journey, our guides roused us at dawn to get under weigh; nothing loath, we ate our breakfast off the broiled remains of our supper, and a strong cup of coffee, and mount-

ing, were soon on the outskirts of the forest. Here a splendid scene broke upon us, the wide boundless prairie, with its bed of snow, just tinged along the horizon by a gleam of crimson light which gradually stole along, and, as the sun rose again, faded away, leaving a pale, cold, hazy blue.

The snow lay fresh and glittering around us, every particle sparkling like diamonds in the sunlight. On we went, the horses, fresh from the day's repose, going gaily along, snorting as they struck up clouds of the powdery snow, and now and then plunging into a hollow filled all over with snow, and almost burying both themselves and riders. We had no mischance, and reached our destination that night, this time a cave in a steep hill, known to the Indians as a sort of half-way station.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ Those vast walls
 Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
 And throned Eternity in icy halls
 Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
 The avalanche, the thunderbolt of snow,
 All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
 Gather around the summits as to show
 How earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.”

BYRON.

OUR resting-place that night was only one day's journey from the Grand Côte, but such a journey ! It consisted of a systematic crossing and recrossing of the river, until I really believed my legs were frozen ; at any rate, every bit of clothes I had on was stiff with ice, for as they became wet from the splashing in the fords, the damp froze until they became as stiff as a board.

Our first view of the Grand Côte was

under sunset, and nothing could have been more sublime; a dark purple cloud lay encircling the summit, the base was in cold dim shadow, while a mid-line of bright golden sunshine ran across, intersected here and there by the blue of a shadow caused by the inequalities of the surface.

Looking up as we did upon this stupendous mass of trackless snow, the barrier between the two sides of America seemed utterly insurmountable, and it would indeed be so but for the gorge worn by the waters of the Columbia, which from the spot we reached was not in view.

We went on a few miles amidst many difficulties, and in the most intensely cold air I ever felt, until we reached the bed of the river, and leading our horses down, got under the shelter of a large overhanging rock for the night, from which point the ascent was to begin next day.

The river point is here a mighty rushing torrent, struggling to escape from the pressure

above, and chafing against the rocks that rise to impede its progress until white with fury. I amused myself until supper time in watching the strife of the waters, and in vain looked upwards for any sign of a road or passage.

Just as we had discussed our evening meal, which, though not a very luxurious one, with appetites such as ours, was very acceptable, we heard sounds of human voices, and presently a whole party of voyageurs were in sight, greeting us with loud shouts and welcome.

These men had just crossed the gorge of the mountain, having come from Canada, St. Lawrence being their starting point, from which they had proceeded up by the Red River country, and finally in almost a direct line to the Athabasca, a river flowing from the same source as the Columbia, but in the opposite direction, and finally losing itself in Lake Winnipeg. The voyageurs were chiefly men who had travelled the route for years, but among them, and taking advantage of their knowledge and escort, were two or three settlers,

and a Presbyterian missionary, all of whom spoke enthusiastically of the country they had passed before reaching the Rocky Mountains, and agreed that the route thence from Canada was not only practicable but easy, and presented few engineering difficulties; their greatest trial had been crossing the mountain chain, and if that could be in any manner lessened, they seemed confident that the way was the most practicable, as well as the most direct.

We spent a very jolly night with them, and parted in the hope of getting back in time to join them in running down the Columbia. At sunrise we began the ascent, and twenty hours hard work brought us to a small deep lake, completely embosomed in the mountain, which some regard as the source of the Columbia.

The lake, though not large, is of such depth as to lead to the belief that it occupies the mouth of an old volcano. It goes by the name of the Committee's Punch-bowl, though for what reason I never discovered. The

water, which was obtained by breaking the ice, was so cool and clear that it sparkled like champagne when poured from glass to glass, and I drank cup after cup, thinking I could never have too much of such nectar.

We passed the night by the lake, which is about three quarters of a mile round, under shelter of the rocks; and though we had suffered much previously from the piercing cold, we were not at all inconvenienced by it during our sleep, and woke in the morning, with the sun shining down upon us, warm and radiant. It was in vain to propose returning—even though my month had only two days to run. I knew I could take a little law, and trust to a few kind words dropt by the Admiral, about my miscalculating the length of time the journey would occupy. How could we tear ourselves away from such a spot, whence, by ascending a pinnacle, we could look upon the eastern and western worlds of America spread limitless before us? So again we stayed all day, clambering about, picking

up relics to carry home, and after a second night, bid a reluctant farewell, and began our descent of the Côte. This was much more simple than the ascent, and only occupied twelve hours, but with an infinity of falls, slips, and consequent bruises, so that we were glad enough to go to sleep and rest our weary limbs, leaving the start homewards for another day.

All that night I dreamt of avalanches and glaciers, of slipping down immeasurable mountains, and finding myself engulfed in snow, or imprisoned in some ice-bound dungeon—an accident by no means improbable in the descent, and one that, I was told, had frequently happened.

CHAPTER XIV.

“This noblest beast of chase, that vainly doth but fear,
Some bank or quickset finds, to which his haunch opposed,
He turns upon his foes, that soon have aim inclosed.”

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

THE next day we reached the last encampment, and found all on the *qui vive* about a herd of buffaloes, which the Indians had tracked for several days, and now reported only ten miles off. Buffaloes are not so common on the west side of the Rocky Mountains, or in the Columbian district, as they were, and the present herd was said to be unusually large, besides being at a season they do not generally appear here; so that the excitement was proportionally great, and the preparations on the best scale the means of the place per-

mitted. We hired horses, and, delighted to have an opportunity of joining such an expedition, set off with them at an early hour in the morning; the Indians armed with spears, bows, and some few of them proudly flourishing rifles.

After a gallop of some two hours, we came up with the scouts, and heard that the buffaloes were just a short way in advance, lying unsuspectingly behind a rising ground and hill. The Indians, from their experience, were deputed to lead the way, and I, for one, got close to an old wise-looking fellow, whose beautiful riding and skill in managing a fiery little brute of a horse had earlier attracted my admiration, and as he spoke pretty good English, I found I had made a lucky hit in my choice.

When we got to the top of the hill, and looked upon the plain completely covered with buffaloes, I was almost inclined to turn tail and get off, the herd I had seen before being nothing compared to this. A long wide

valley was literally covered with them, the snow being trodden into a soft dark mud, with which they themselves were covered, presenting a most ferocious aspect. I was looking pretty calmly over the plain, when a great shaggy brute jumped up almost at my feet ; he had lain hid by a bush up to this time, and I suppose had been wandering in dreams, as, generally speaking, their hearing is particularly quick, indeed so much so that the Indians affirm they have an attendant spirit, who watches the approach of a human enemy, and warns them accordingly.

The plain was soon a scene of great confusion, for directly we made our appearance, the animals began rushing together, seemingly too much afraid to charge one way or another, their indecision being increased by the Indians galloping to and fro with loud shouts, now and then letting an arrow whistle in amongst the frightened creatures—a piece of amusement I did not see the object of, but

which I found out was only to attract attention and surprise us, the Indians being very conceited fellows, and considerably jealous of an Englishman's rifle and cool calculation, so that they are delighted to take an opportunity of showing us what they can do.

After a time there was a slight pause, and the horses ceased their career, seeing an approaching danger we amateurs knew nothing about, namely, that the herd were going to charge upon us. Suddenly, and as if driven by a thunderbolt, the mass faced about, and before I could almost see what they were about, they were down upon us, with a rush like the roar of a torrent. I had only time to wonder what was to be done, when my old friend seized my horse's rein, and laying his bow sharply across his flanks, off we went in the very front of the herd. For a time I held my breath, and when I turned to look behind me, the whole danger was plain.

We were not twenty yards before a line of buffaloes at least a quarter of a mile in

width, and almost as much in depth. On they came at a steady, never-varying gallop, their heads almost touching the ground, and the steam gushing from their red nostrils. On they came, regular as a charge of cavalry. Our situation was by no means agreeable ; a false step, a check in our speed, and we should be overwhelmed.

Nothing was to be seen of my friends, and I had little time to think as we tore along, our gallant little horses, aware of their danger, soon putting a wider space between themselves and pursuers.

A steep hill with a rocky front rose before us, and pointing to it, my guide signified it was our only chance of safety ; and for this we stretched along, and gaining its base, threw our reins on the horses' necks, and let them scramble up, which they did by true instinct, facing about when they reached the top.

The dark living wave, which was even then below us, dividing into two streams, passed round our harbour of refuge. I think I never

heaved such a sigh of relief before, and felt it was truly a marvellously near gallop for our lives.

When the last buffalo had passed, we saw the rest of the party following up, to all appearance safe, and so they turned out to be all but one, and he, poor fellow, we found a mangled, trodden mass, barely discernible from the horse he had ridden. We rode after the herd for more than two hours, and brought down six fine full-grown bulls, and as many cows; then night coming on, and the danger of the carcasses being attacked by the wolves, which always, but especially in winter, travel in the wake of a herd of buffaloes, we determined to secure those we had shot, and leave the rest to the chance of running up to them next day. We succeeded in getting the carcasses dragged into two lots, and divided our forces to watch over them, picketing our horses close beside them on one side, and lighting a fire on both sides to warn off the hungry animals.

After supper off a fresh-cut steak, dressed in the manner my friend Franks had taught me, and pronounced excellent by the whole party, we lay down, leaving two to act as sentinels to be relieved at midnight.

I volunteered for the second watch, so lay down to get my sleep out, and, from habit, was soon in the land of dreams, and riding my life and death race over again.

I must have slept pretty soundly, for the report of a rifle was the first thing that disturbed me, and when I started up I had the satisfaction of hearing a chorus of howls ; the same long shrill howl which you can never forget, or mistake, if once heard. We were evidently surrounded by a troop of wolves, and to judge by the shots from the other little encampment, were not solus in our enjoyment. We were now all on the alert, and seeing that hunger had made the brutes desperate, we agreed to stay up and keep our own.

For hours the wild howling continued, and delay making the animals more eager, I could

see their ugly faces and glittering eyes glowering all round, and assisted in several broadsides, which sent them howling and snarling away for a few minutes. Then back they came, and, to judge from the row they kicked up, must have eaten and quarrelled over the remains of their defunct comrades. As they began to breathe the morning air, they grew braver in their desperation, and two actually crept forward, and choosing an unguarded spot, reached the beef, but getting sight of them, they soon paid for their stolen march with their lives.

At daylight the brutes left us, and slunk away heaven knows where, but I daresay not far off, as, by instinct, they know the Indians only carry off the best pieces of the flesh, and that all the rest would eventually fall to their share.

We did not remain to see the cutting-up operation, but, with an Indian to guide us, galloped back to the station, and began our voyage down the river.

Our next halting-place, worthy of mention, was Colville, which, in coming up, we had passed, intending to change our quarters as we returned, and thus see more of the places.

Colville is situated a short way above the Kettle Falls, standing in a prairie environed by mountains, a perfect oasis of fertility. There is a flourishing little settlement, and not far off, one or two mission stations. The Indians are of a tribe called Spokane, and, I believe, many have become Christians, and lead an orderly agricultural life. Another tribe, whose name I do not know, have a large village a few miles below the English settlement, and build pretty, fantastic-looking huts, upon something like the foundation of some of the domiciles in the Marquesas ; namely, a well-boarded platform raised upon strong posts. The sides of the hut are wood ; these and the top are covered with a thick layer of matting.

These Indians are sometimes called the Salmon Indians, from their skill in fishing, as

well as a right of fishery which they assume, levying a sort of tax, in the shape of blankets and mats, from stranger tribes, who come to fish in the water they lay claim to.

We got on at a splendid rate until we reached Fort Okonagan, and again rested. It is from this fort that the Columbian route to the gold country strikes off, and the passage of miners has given it somewhat the character of the stations I have described on the Frazer.

The trail for the diggings ascends the Okonagan River partly, though it does not confine itself to the bed of the stream, its course being so serpentine that considerable time would be thrown away in following its windings. Reaching a stretch of fine, rich, and easily-cultivated country, called the Similk-a-meen, here you find splendid pasturage, the best, it is said, in the district of Columbia. Crossing from here, Nicholas Lake is the next point, and from thence, Thompson's River, one of the veins of the gold district, is easily reached.

Many miners have lately chosen this route, and, eventually, it will, I have no doubt, be the means of inducing emigrants to take up the rich and prolific land their Maker has prepared for them, particularly as the means of transit are likely to become so much quicker and easier. Steam navigation has already reached the Walla Walla, a no impossible distance below Fort Okanagan, and efforts, which must be successful if well carried out, are going on to bring it still nearer.

A short way from Fort Okanagan is the far-famed and wonderful Grande Coulée, through which a portion of the overland route to Walla Walla lies. After making due enquiry as to the chance of either catching a returning boat or hiring one, we decided upon going through this pass, and paying off our crew, find our way down as best we could, and as quickly too, time being a great object. Already, strictly speaking, our leave was over; but we all had the assurance that a week or ten days would do us no harm.

The Grand Coulée is a deep ravine, more like the bed of a torrent than anything else, and is fully one hundred miles in length ; it is walled on either side by enormous perpendicular cliffs, and, once in the beautiful valley at the bottom, you must continue your course, as there are very few places from which you could gain the upper ground. We spent two nights in this strange wild pass, encamping in the most romantic spots you could imagine, and on the third reached the Priest's Rapids ; from whence to Walla Walla it was all plain sailing, and one day and night's journey brought us down. Here we came to a stop, for there were no boats, one which was expected not having arrived, and when she did come, she had to remain several days. Thus we were compelled to hire again, and were considerably out of pocket, as the men, seeing what we were, knew that if we were in a hurry, it was proof that our leave was up, and therefore made the most exorbitant charges, which we, having no alternative, were obliged to consent to.

The distance to the Dalles is one hundred and thirty miles, and this they bound themselves to accomplish in three full days, giving us six hours on shore at night if we wished it. Their boat was one of the prettiest and swiftest I have seen, and sped along with the current, oars and sail too being used when the wind was in our favour. We reached the Dalles just one hour within their time, thus making an almost unheard-of quick passage, and bringing us in time to catch the steamer for Portland, into which we tumbled out of breath with our race, but doomed to be still more so, for if we told our adventures once, I am sure we did so twenty times in the first day, people being quite voracious in their curiosity.

The passengers were a strange lot, men of every nation and character, from the quiet missionary to the reckless spendthrift, who, having devoured his fortune in the mother country, had been sent out to seek another in the new Eldorado. Such gentlemen seldom fulfil the hopes of their anxious friends ; they

cannot stand the hard work ; and if they do try the “diggins,” generally fall into a state of low fever from exposure, or by living upon the abominable spirit that is here called brandy or rum, bring on delirium tremens, and are heard of no more.

Many never go to the gold country at all, and sink into the most depraved habits and misery in the different towns. My opinion is that if a man has not sense to direct his ways at home, the colonies are the worst place to send him to. He must here exercise either greater powers of cunning, and a certain kind of cleverness, or by the upright honesty of his heart and actions defeat the roguery every one has at first to contend with. There is no medium, and in such places it is every man for himself ; and he must be either an honest man, or give up all ideas of even appearing as such. Yet people must not judge of Vancouver's and New Caledonia by the same standard as California. In the former, the gold discoveries have *followed* the coloni-

zation, and are looked upon as a concomitant part, and moreover good order and justice were already rooted and prepared to meet and counteract the accompanying evils of an influx of gold-seekers. The colony is essentially agricultural, and such in spite of the mining fever will it remain.

When I got back to Victoria, I found my old ship gone, and as yet no intelligence of the new; so, although I had exceeded my proposed absence by nearly three weeks, no annoyance came of it, and I had a full week longer to enjoy myself on shore, and see still more of the surrounding country, which was now beginning to wear a spring-like aspect. There farmers were all head-over-ears in business, and every idle man in the place could obtain employment and good wages if he liked, and several ship-loads of emigrants were instantly engaged, and must have thought they had arrived at the very goal of their dreams; as when once a good workman is set agoing, if he keeps steady at it, and is

not puffed up by the first smile of Dame Fortune, he may go on earning first-rate wages, and in a few years set up on his own account.

They tell me washermen and women make the most money, nor do I doubt it, taking into consideration the fabulous price they charge for washing. A mid's pocket money goes but a small way when he pays ten or twelve shillings a dozen for washing ; these amiable votaries of the tub actually having the audacity to make this charge, and if you do not want to do your washing for yourself, you must pay your money and wear clean clothes, which really now cost more to be made clean than they did in their fresh new beauty. Coloured flannel is the only thing a fellow can afford to wear, and we poor sailors have only a chance of wearing it in plain togs, so that it is really no joke to feel you are putting on a crown's worth of clothing every full dress white day—and winter is a happy season, for then the blue inexpressibles are in force.

CHAPTER XV.

“ He lay asleep and cumbrous
 On the summit of the mountains,
 Like a rock with masses on it,
 Spotted brown and grey with mosses,
 Silently he stole upon him.”

LONGFELLOW.

ONCE comfortably established in my lodgings in Victoria, I cannot say I had any strong desire to hear of the arrival of my new ship ; and as if to humour me, she met with bad weather off Callao, and was detained there for something like three weeks, leaving me to kick my heels and enjoy my shore life since my trip up the Columbia. I had become a perfect hero of renown, and more than once saw my name and adventures figuring in paragraphs in the Victoria Gazette.

Parties bent on hunting excursions came to consult me as to the necessary equipment for the journey; I soon began almost to wish I had not gone, and was getting out of patience altogether, when the return of an exploring party from a long and tedious but deeply interesting survey of Queen Charlotte's Island and the north-west coast of British Columbia put me into the shadow, and most thankfully did I make my farewell bow to the public, a duty, I am sorry to say, I shall have to perform very shortly, though with much greater regret than in the instance which brought the above remark forth.

But to return to Victoria. The expedition whose opportune arrival soon set the colony in a blaze, and speculators racking their brains as to the best mode of letting in the public, had really prospected or surveyed Queen Charlotte's Island, whence, instead of finding the quantities of gold reported, they brought back intelligence that it was exhausted, and not worth the expense of

working; but if some little disappointment was caused by this, it was amply compensated for by the descriptions they gave of the plains lying upon the shores of the Naas river, where, amidst rich and beautiful scenery, the travellers discovered gold at every step, so that both to the settler and digger this new district held forth its arms, and only waited to be claimed.

The way to get at it was the only question, and that could not long remain in doubt, at least I should fancy not, where there were hundreds of strong eager spirits ready to face any difficulty in pursuit of their great end—gold.

The weather was now magnificent, and the promise of summer all one could wish; the town was full of miners *en route* for the diggings, and every few days brought an influx of new faces, some back from their winter's dissipation at San Francisco, where, like the Prodigal Son, "they had spent all they had," and were now coming back to their parent

tree again to see if they could lay in another store ; and others from beyond the sea, with fresh pink and white faces, and well cut, decent clothing.

Whenever I could hear of the arrival of an emigrant ship, I went down to watch the disembarkation, and many a lively example of first impressions did I store up. I had seen the arrival of the same class of ship and passengers both at Melbourne and Sydney, but in neither place did I observe faces radiant with such evident hopefulness as at Victoria. It was fine weather, and the scenery round Esquimalt is, as I have before said, very lovely. More than this perhaps, the ship is received by Englishmen, who greet the strangers in the English tongue ; not the abominable slang which has sprung up in our older colonies. The greater proportion of the emigrants were Irish, and many of the old hands came from the same little island, and, like all their countrymen, possess a strong bond of brotherhood. The greetings were often of

the most ludicrous description, and the welcome embraces worthy of our inimitable John Leech.

Many of the poor people landed with their fortune on their backs, in the shape of a suit of clothes ; some, a very few, had neat little deal boxes, containing a fresh kit ; others, but still fewer, a little store of “ rale golden guineas,” stiched up in their belt, or, in the case of the women, fastened into the lining of their stays. Most of the young women had found sweethearts on the way out, and the lucky ones, with the valuable stays, were soon united to the long-headed swains who gave them the protection of their arms in return for the little fortune wherewith to start in the world. Yet, with or without money, the clean cotton dresses and bright faces made their own way, and none of them need want situations and work if they were willing to be industrious.

Of course in such a place as Victoria, crammed as it then was with perhaps the most

dissipated and reckless set of men on earth, there was no lack of temptation to the newcomers; but I was glad to see the clergymen, and many of the ladies, too, coming boldly forward, and giving their protection and advice gratuitously, until each girl should find a situation to suit her. It would be well if ladies at home took a little more heed to extend their care beyond the servant's hall, and would think of the words, "Lead us not into temptation," as applicable in a slightly varied form, "Let others not fall into temptation"—"a word in time, will often save a life of crime."

When the news of my new ship having come to grief reached me, I determined to have another excursion inland, and began looking about for a companion and guide. I went into the drinking booths of an evening, and, after treating the men, got them to talk of their former lives; but for two or three days my search was unsuccessful, and I was just coming to think this plan of mine a very bad

one, when I fell in with one of the queerest characters I have ever had the luck to come across, in the person of a Yankee, a long-limbed, lanthorn-jawed Kentuckian, with a twang like a bow-string, and a vocabulary, when excited, that sometimes nearly cracked his own jaws, and for a day or two proved perfectly unintelligible to me. Luckily this peculiarity only blazed forth when he was either drunk or pugnacious. At all times, however, he was slightly cracked, and it was this very thing, or rather hearing him recount its cause, that decided me on making him my companion.

His appearance struck me directly I entered the room, where, knowing what I was looking out for, the landlord managed to bring together any fellows he thought at all likely. "I've got your man, Sir," he whispered, "but I'll let you find him out yourself. What'll you take to drink, Master?" These last words were said in his loudest shop voice, and as usual I turned to my neighbours, and making a polite bow, said I would stand them all round, if

each man would sing out for a glass of his favourite beverage. A general cheer, and a whole host of complimentary things followed my speech, but above all sounded a harsh, clear voice.

“Thank ye, stranger, I guess you warn’t bred in a pig-sty. Here’s my hand on’t, and I drink yer damned good health.”

With this, the Yankee strode up, and after nearly knocking me down with a slap on the back, seized my hand, and wrung it in one of his horny paws until the water started into my eyes.

The landlord, coming up with a tumbler of liquor, of some unknown name, my enthusiastic friend “guessed I was none o’ them infarnal diggers ;” and hearing I was a naval officer, drank the health of the British navy, and swore he’d stand a go all round to drink my health.

This elicited fresh applause, and very soon the fun grew fast and furious. Songs became the order of the night, and out of deference to

my presence were more decorous than usual. One man, as rough-looking a subject as you could well see, sang “Auld lang syne” with a truth and pathos I shall never forget.

I could not believe my eyes at first, that the rich, mellow strain I was listening to came out of the grim, hairy mouth of the ill-countenanced man before me. My curiosity was roused, and under pretence of lighting a cigar, I went up to the table, and asked the landlord who he was. To my amazement, I heard the name of one whose powers of song had often charmed the musical world at home; I had heard him in London, and witnessed his triumph there. Little did I imagine I should find him in such company.

When I got back to my seat he was gone, and I never saw him again.

“I can’t electrify ye like that chap,” my Yankee friend was saying, “but I can and wull tell ye a story that’ll make yer hair stand on end considerably more; that’s to say, if the stranger is agreeable.”

"Yes, certainly," said I, "if it's a hunting-story."

"Sartin o' that, stranger, it is a hunting story, and now I'll begin—but guess you'd better liccor, it's pretty startlin' for young hands."

After the necessary liquoring process had been gone through, the Yankee stretched his long legs to their utmost length, squirted a small fountain of tobacco juice right between my legs, and thus commenced:—

"Wall, ye see, I war raised in old Kentucky. Mayhap, you've never travelled thar. It's a darned fine country; I guess this ain't its equal, though running as near neck an' neck as any I ever saw. Wall, there is a saying in our family that every third son will be either a hunter or a thief. Now I don't calculate on the latter being a very praiseworthy trade, and as I happened to be the third son, I tuk to the woods, but as a perliminary step, I made acquaintance with the Redskins, for I take it our folk hev gone

considerable the wrong way in that pint. It isn't likely we'll make frins o' the critters if we treat 'em no better nor varmin, or not so good ; for a white chap 'll buy the hide o' varmin, and sometimes come down han'some, too, but he'll give nothin' for a Redskin.

" Hevin made up wi' them, I tuk to them in arnest, an' found them considerable clever chaps at huntin', with a heap more knowledge o' the ways o' the animals than any o' the pale-faces I'd had the fortin to jump with.

" Wi' them I got uncommon 'cute, and war called Long-shot, fur, ye see, I could send a bullet into a buffalo's eye at an uncommon long distance, and never failed ; if I shot I killed. And the Ingins soon fun' that out—they ain't slow, I guess, an' a sight better comrades than a deal o' them that looks down on them.

" Once in the woods, a chap rarely takes on with quieter life again, he feels smothered like in a house ; so I stays in the woods, and

hevin' finished my edication with the Red-skins, I sets off to try my own luck.

"I don't mean to tell ye the story o' my life, but only that I got a name in the woods, and the bison came to know on it; even the panthers and bars knew me, an' began to fight shy, keepin' well out o' reach. So, seein' I was too well known in them parts to git my livin', I takes tracks for the north, and after setting up my mark there pretty considerable, I heerd them tellin' tremendous stories o' the West. Guess I was flabbergasted, an' no mistake, when I heerd sensible men talk o' picking up gold by handfuls. That war better than shootin', and had somethin' nigh akin to thievin'—so might do for me.

"Not hevin' much luggage to pack—fur ye see, stranger, I carried my traps on my back—I set off fur the West, taking tracks fur the Rocky Mountains, an' keepin' as nigh due west from Lake Superior. Hevin' gone down to Montreal to git a new revolver, I got pretty well laughed at, I can tell ye, when

they found out what I was bent on, and plenty good advice. That's tarnation cheap, stranger, pr'aps you've found that ; guess I hev. Plenty o' that, particlar from yer near kin. .

" Wall, I laughed, and shoulderin' my rifle, off I tuk, and a precious long track I had, an' no mistake ; it jest tuk me a year and two months to cross the country. But then I had my pleasure fur it, and an almighty lot of huntin'. It's out o' my power to enumerate the beasts I killed, fur I never missed, an' as I said, when I hit I killed. Bars I began to think little of, an' jest shot or not as my fancy tuk me. They always ran away ; jist one look in my face, an' off they'd go, a-tryin' to put thar tails between thar legs, and many a good larf they've giv me.

" Wall, stranger, I got to this wonderful land, an' crossed to Victoria, an' after a time, got sick o' street life, and pretty considerable slack in the money line. It war a bad time fur the mines, they said, so I hit upon the

woods, and began to feel myself again when I lay down with my head upon a bunch o' grass, and the night breezes a-whistling round me.

“ In Victoria they had told me o' the wild beasts, but I looked upon them as twisters, and guessed I could walk into them a few when I got back.

“ Fust night I slept splendiferous, and dreamt o' the prairies across the mountains. Second night t'war much the same; but I had seen none o' the beasts they told of. But, thinks I, thar's a change in the prospect, I'm getting on to the hills; so here goes fur luck.

“ That day I shot a couple of deer, and dragged one down to a spring, nigh which I intended to camp for the night. Hevin' cut up the buck, and eaten my supper, I left him lyin', and crept up a rock to get out o' the way, feelin' pretty sarten that if thar war any wild beasts within a mile, they'd pay me a visit afore daylight. I warn't much out o' my

reckonin', I guess, fur pretty sharp arter the sun hid his old red face I heerd the growl of a panthar, not a mile off, thin a *tremendious* row. Ay, thinks I, you've fallen upon t'other deer, and when ye've filled yer bellies thar, I may look fur ye here.

“While I was meditatin', the moon lifts up her eyes, and gradually I got to see the ground round the spring. Presently the bushes on the bank to the left began movin', and thin out walks a bar, the biggest bar I iver see; up he gets on his hind legs, an' after smoothin' his whiskers an' lookin' about, he walks up to the carcass and begins his supper—eatin' the dainty morsels, an' sittin' up now and thin to enjoy himself.

“I niver saw sich a fellow, he war as big as a bison bull—an' thinks I how I'll astonish the Victori' chaps.

“The old fellow wasn't to hev it all to himself, fur presently a couple o' panthars kum up, and claims thar share; with that, an' before I was awar, the bar gives a growl

an' walks off, hevin' dined pretty considerable, an' left me cursin' myself fur not securin' him. The panthars now gethered up, fightin' an' squabblin' like mad; determined to let off my rifle, I put a bullet into a couple of them, right an' left—with that off goes the rest; an' I fell asleep, an' slep till daylight, whin I proceeds to take off the hides an' secure the left fore paw as a witness—all the while keepin' a sharp look out for the bar, hevin' no knowledge of thar manners in Vancouver's. Whin I hed skin'd the panthars and washed off the blood, I spreads the hides out fur to dry a bit, an' took tracks after the bar, but t'war no manner of use, he was gone; an' feelin' sartin' the pop o' my rifle would keep him clar o' that spot for a day or two, I rolled up the skins, and put my best foot forrad.

“I hed good luck that day, killin' a small she bar, an' a couple more deer—the road wasn't easy travellin', an' now and thin I hed well nigh to turn back, from the ugly

ravines that came in the way. Night found me on the edge o' one o' these, and at a mighty loss, neither water or shelter convenient. Wall, stranger, what would you hev done? Guess you'd ha' stayed whar ye war till daylight ; but I didn't. Being sartin o' finding water at the bottom o' the gully afore me, I commenced descendin', sometimes gettin' along a tree, then droppin' down a rock, then slippin' all the time. I thought I hard a queer noise behind me, fur all the world as if somebody was coming after ; if I stopped, the noise stopped—if I wint on, so did it. I ain't superstitious, stranger, but it ain't pleasant, I can tell yer, to think thar's summutter arter ye in a dark night, an' gettin' down into a pit as dark as hell—but still I persevered.

“ I hard water, an' my tongue was gettin' too big fur my mouth with thirst, so, on I goes, an' gits to the bottom, steppin' bang into a pool of water. Down I sits, and laps up a bellyful. Wall, while I was there, the

moon comes over the openin' an' shews her face in the water, but alongside thar shewed another face. It war the big bar—thar he war, jist behind me, lookin' at his ugly fiz in the same reflector.

“Tell ye, stranger, 'twar rather queer. I niver heerd o' a bar trackin' ye befor, 'twarnt like natur' somehow ; so I gets into something mighty like a shake, an' began to wish I'd staid up the bank.

“But I could not hold my head to the water any longer, so I up, holdin' my rifle convenient, an' facin' round, looked fur the bar jist in time to catch a glimpse o' him slippin' up the bank. He war shy it seemed, so settin' my back agin' a tree, I made up my mind to wait. Somehow I got sleepy, an' suppose I must ha' dropped off a bit, fur I was waked by a grunt pretty nigh, an' lookin' up, saw the bar on his hind legs slap afore me—'twar but a sight, but one that set my pulses tingling. He war sich a whopper—there war scarcely room fur my rifle to rise, he war so near ; but

bang went both barrels into his breast, an' next moment his arms were round me, and I was pantin' like a porpoise in his hug. I knew he war wounded, fur the blood was spoutin' out in my face, an' if I could hold out long enough, I might see him out yet, but it war tight work, an' no mistake ; 'twarn't a beauty hug, stranger, a big bar's rayther a rough sweetheart. Wall, I gets pretty well blowed, then in my struggles gets my knife and gives the beggar a dig in the belly, which made him roar like mad ; then I gives another, and as bad luck hed it, my knife broke slap off the handle, an' thar I war, at his marcy, jist as helpless as an unborn babe. 'Twarn't a great chance of life, but I didn't give in ; getting up my hands to his throat, I held on, but that war as nothin.' Thin I squeezed myself down and kicked like mad ; that only made the beggar worser, an' as I kicked he hugged till the breath war out o' me, an' I suppose I'd fainted clean off, fur when I begin to think agin it war broad daylight, an' I was lyin'

pretty warm, regularly covered up with the bar, who war stone dead.

“ I guess though, whan I cum to try an’ move, it war not so easy. The pains in my body war considerable, so I lay still a bit, jist to think as it war. Thin I tries to extricate myself, an’ gits out o’ his arms, but I war crushed into a jelly, an’ one o’ my arms broke clean across, an’ thar war an almighty singin’ goin’ on in my ears, an’ queer lights a-dancin’ all round me. Thinks I, I’m done for, an’ no mistake, but before I give in I’ll hev’ a luk at the bar, so I goes up, fur I could not see him fur the lights. By Gor ! he war a big un, sich a won I niver saw ; but then I grew sick agin, and hed jist time to creep under a ledge o’ rock whin I goes off agin.

“ This time I s’pose I had a long spell, for when I comes round I was as thin as a lath, and uncommon hungry ; and thar lay the big bar almost eaten ; ‘twas singular, stranger, how I’d got off that lot. Wall, thinks I, there’s nothing else, so I crawls to the bar,

and gets a mouthful o' the flesh, nasty half rotten stuff it war ; but beggars mustn't be choosers, so I eats, and crawls back, and sleeps, then wakes up a bit refreshed, and looks at my rifle, ready to hev a shy at the animals that would come at night. As good luck would hev it, the first animal I see war an Ingin ; so I hollared, and he looked a while, then scampered off, an' I thought I was in as great a fix as afore ; but I warn't meant to die in that way it seems, for back comes the Ingin with five or six more, an' claps their hands, making all sorts o' faces at the bar. Then they comes to me, an' carries me off to their camp, whar I stayed till I got well agin, which war a precious long spell, and somehow I han't ever been like myself agin."

Such was my new acquaintance's story, and as it proved him the man for me, without further words I broached the subject ; he agreed, and arranged to come to my rooms next morning. Next day, 'punctual to a minute, up came my new friend ; he had a beautiful

rifle in his hand, and a strong-haired, wiry terrier close at his heels. Cap in hand, he stood bowing at the door, waiting my invitation to enter, which when I had given, and he had accepted, his first glance was at my gun-case and rifle, &c., which I had prepared for inspection, then at the various trophies of my hunting expeditions ; these, with a feeling I daresay some of my readers can understand, I had laid out to the best advantage. I saw a little sparkle of light flash into his eyes as he glanced round, and a very small smile steal to the corners of his mouth, but he said nothing, except to guess I'd made good use of my time, which I assured him I always tried to do, and proposed that he should look to the fittings of my gun, and make out a route for us. This he did, amusing me very much by his criticisms and strange ideas of what he considered sportsman-like, at the same time shewing such a complete knowledge of the whole thing, that I could not but consider myself one of the luckiest men alive to have come

across him. So effectually did he plan and arrange everything, that we were on our way next morning at daylight.

Our first halting place was the Cowitchen River, the banks of which we then followed for some distance, striking off for the mountains on the third day. The weather was now so warm that we could sleep without any fire, and we managed to cook and carry enough for a couple of days at a time. We had not much sport for the first few days, but this, Phil my Yankee guide, accounted for by the fact that the animals retired further from the settlements at that season, and that we should have to get into the heart of the trails before we fell in with the larger beasts.

Partridges we saw in great numbers, besides lots of small birds and squirrels ; loath as I was to kill the latter, I was often glad to make my supper off a couple, and first-rate eating they proved. Amongst other accomplishments, Phil was a first-rate cook, and many a savoury mouthful did he prepare during our

trip. As yet we had only chanced upon stray Indians, but presently we came upon a large village, which Phil told me belonged to the tribe that had taken such good care of him after his fight with the “big bar;” and if I had had the slightest doubt in the veracity of his tale before, I could not now, for no sooner did the fact of his arrival become known than the natives flocked up to him with every expression of welcome and delight—the chief himself calling him his great brother, and giving him one of the royal lodges as his abode.

Under his auspices, I received a very flattering welcome, and was soon seated cheek by jowl with the old king himself, who, hearing I was what he called a “warrior” of the Queen’s, began to grow tremendously inquisitive about all we did at home, and how the big guns could fire so far; he had, it seems, witnessed our ships exercising, and shewed me a cannon ball he had picked up at what he considered a marvellous distance from the ship.

I suspect my Yankee friend had some private attraction in this camp, as I saw nothing of him all night, and next morning observed a pretty little Indian maiden keeping close beside him, watching his every movement with her large swimming eyes—now and then getting a whispered word of acknowledgment from Phil, that made the pearly teeth visible, and sometimes elicited a peal of laughter. Taking it upon myself to rally Master Phil, he very coolly told me she was his wife when he came there, and that she was “considerable fond of him.”

Seeing this state of things, I began to fear my chance of moving forward was small, when, to my surprise, up came Phil, rifle in hand, and announced himself ready for the start. I asked how he could tear himself away from his pretty wife, and got for answer intelligence that put me out a little, namely, that the lady was to accompany us, and as Phil said she would be “very useful to cook,” I could make no objections. Thus strengthened, we

set off, and I really believe the dark-eyed beauty brought us luck, as that very night Phil shot a panther, who, attracted by the remains of our supper, came too close to the nuptial couch, and got the contents of the pet rifle.

The panther had a beautiful skin, as glossy and soft as a race-horse's, and very easily preserved ; which part of the business the Indian girl performed during our absence next day, giving me the hide as a couch that very night.

During our walk next day we saw several deer, and shot two, though we only succeeded in securing one, the other jumping down one of the deep fissures, of which there are so many along the mountain sides.

As we were wending our way back, Phil suddenly stopped me, and pointing to a tree right ahead, bid me look. I did so, and soon made out a panther stretched along a thick branch, evidently watching something, and ready for his spring.

We were down wind from him, and the mossy ground did not give any warning of our footsteps. So intent upon his prey was the animal, he had not noticed our approach. Seeing this, we stood back, and hiding behind two trees, watched the event.

Presently, a couple of deer trotted down the glade, now and then stopping to crop a few fresh leaves, perfectly unsuspecting of danger. As they approached the fatal tree, they separated, and one only, the buck, came near enough. Then, uttering a roar that made the woods ring, down dropt the panther, his teeth across the backbone of the buck, his whole weight clinging to and bearing down the unfortunate animal. There was a short but sharp struggle, as the panther was a small one of his kind, and evidently young, while the deer was a fine old stag, with a splendid pair of antlers, in the present instance of no use.

As soon as the victory was complete, and before the conqueror had time to tear his prey

much, crack went Phil's unerring piece, and with a growl of agony and surprise the panther rolled over, gave one or two quivering kicks, and died even in the arms of Victory.

We only saw three bears on our journey, killing two, and losing the third, through my gun missing fire.

One of the bears was a very queer fellow. We came upon him in daylight, sunning himself on a sandy bank near a stream. Catching sight of us almost as quickly as we did of him, he made for a cave close at hand. Here we blockaded him for an hour, trying to get him out by sending in the terrier. This not answering our purpose, Phil proposed our going in and shooting him where he was, assuring me that, as he had not shewn fight before, he would not muster pluck now. So, trusting to him, I followed.

The cavern was so dark that for a few seconds (very long ones they seemed to me) I could see nothing but a black mass ; then, as my eyes grew accustomed to it, I could

distinguish a large cave, at one corner of which sat the bear, erect on his hind legs, and his fore-paws folded crossways over his face.

I remembered Phil telling me this was a favourite trick with them, and could scarcely help laughing at the great clumsy beast, with his sheepish-looking face, sitting waiting to be shot—an end soon put to him by the Yankee, who never missed an opportunity of shedding blood, and, sooth to say, sometimes provoked me a little by shooting without giving me a turn.

We had now been five days out after leaving the Indian camp, and going through some very hard work. My time would be up by the date of our return, so, with some difficulty and in spite of most imploring glances from the "little wife," I prevailed on Phil to leave his sylvan bower, and begin marching homewards.

We left the wife with her tribe, and were again under weigh for Victoria. But at this

period of our journey, I was unlucky enough to catch a violent cold, and only reached the town in time to get a roof over my head, before I was down with a regular attack of fever, and had the satisfaction of keeping my bed for a fortnight, during the whole of which time Phil never left me, attending me night and day with as much gentleness as a woman.

When I recovered, the first thing I was told was that my ship had arrived. The second, that I ought to get sick leave and go home, as the ship was to lie in the Gulf of California most of the summer, a climate by no means the thing to restore me to health.

I had the choice given me, and decided on joining, willing to risk anything rather than give up my chance of promotion.

I soon got round when once over the fever, and, thanks to my good nurse, had a shorter spell of it altogether than I might have expected. I joined a couple of days before the ship was to sail for San Francisco, and had a warm and kindly welcome from my new

messmates, many of whom had already visited me in my lodgings.

During the last week of my recovery, I amused myself looking up my journal, and finding I had a goodly portion ready, I determined to send it home in ship-shape, leaving its fate in the hands of an old friend, on whose judgment I could depend, as to what to leave, and what to take away.

I shall not say, as so many writers of travels do, that this was never intended to meet the public eye, for the fact is, I meant it to do so all along, and if it possesses little interest for that public, they must just be merciful, and give me credit for, at least, trying to please them, and remember they are trusting to my eyes, not their own, and that our sights as well as ideas may be rather different.

It is very hard to say farewell, dear reader, in any case, but more so when you meet with patient kind friends ; the only consolation is, if we like each other, we need not say farewell

for ever. A sailor's life is a roving life, and the wonders and beauty of God's world inexhaustible, so that, if "my friends and countrymen lend me their ears," I shall possibly find something more to make a book of at a future day.

And so, most patient friends, Good night. I feel I must tear myself away, experiencing most truly that saying,

"Good night is such sweet sorrow,
That I could say good night until to-morrow."

THE END.

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